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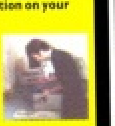
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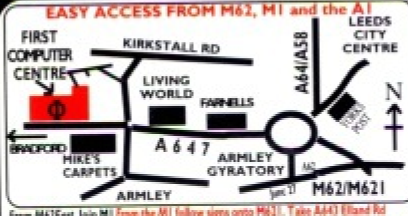
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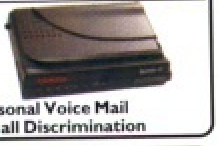
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CD-ROM EDITOR Mat Bettinson
TECHNICAL CONSULTANT John Kennedy
GAMES CONSULTANT Matt Broughton
CONTRIBUTORS Vampyra, Andy Mitchell, Neil Bothwick, Anthony Brice, Mark Forbes, Jason Compton, Paul Nolan, Steven Seybold.
PHOTOGRAPHY Ben Jennings
SYSTEMS AND REPRO Sarah-Jane Leavey, Sarah Best

Advertising, Marketing & Management

ADVERTISING MANAGER Chris Perera
SENIOR SALES EXECUTIVE Marianna Masters
SALES EXECUTIVE Genene Dick
AD PRODUCTION Tina Gynn, Ryan Boundy
PRODUCT MANAGER Kirsten Ritchens
MARKETING EXECUTIVE Claire Matthews
MARKETING MANAGER Alex Gorman
FACILITIES MANAGER Rob McBride
PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Sandra McClean
EXECUTIVE PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Sarah Janes

CU Amiga Magazine

PRIORY COURT
30-32 FARRINGDON LANE
LONDON EC1R 3AU
UNITED KINGDOM
0171 972 6700
GENERAL@CU-AMIGA.CO.UK
SUBS ENQUIRIES: 01858 435350
ADVERTISING PRODUCTION FAX: 0171 216 6219

Contacts

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AMIGA MAGAZINE

CU AMIGA MAGAZINE DECEMBER1996 • CONTENTS

Editorial



Well hello, it's all change this month. I'm pleased to be able to introduce myself to you as the new editor of the mag since the departure of Alan Dykes last month. For those who may not be familiar with me, I've been Technical Editor on CU Amiga Magazine for some time now and this editor's post comes as a highlight of a nine-year career in Amiga magazines. Starting out on the UK's first ever Amiga magazine when it was mailed out by hand on a subscription-only basis (mentioning no names, they're still going though) I've been privileged to see the growth of the Amiga scene from a particularly good vantage point. From this pivotal position of the scene, you get to see the whole thing from both sides: from the readers and Amiga users we meet and speak to, to the developers and suppliers of all the wonderful hardware and software that keeps everything alive and kicking. It's a scene like no other, and one that I'm glad to be a part of. Oh no, it's all going a bit sloppy now so I'll change the subject.

Good stuff? You want good stuff? You've got it! We've got a top issue for you this month, as you've probably already found out. Whether you've got the CD or floppy disk edition, you've got a brilliant exclusive playable demo of Worms – The Director's Cut, quite possibly the best Amiga game ever. Not to mention Wordworth to bring your wordprocessing up to date. Then take a look at those reviews opposite: Draw Studio put to the test, two brand new video graphics packages scrutinised, that Worms game reviewed ...

In a bid to get the whole Amiga world hooked up with a CD-ROM drive we've even included the necessary IDE driver software with this issue on both editions, while our newly-crowned Technical Editor Mat Bettinson has been busy putting together a special 'how-to' feature to go with it. Oh, and there's lots of other stuff too, like the tutorials and far too much to mention here. Next month is going to be even better too, if you can believe that!

Tony

Tony Horgan, Editor

Features

20 The Best of Both Worlds

Resourceful Amiga game developers Effigy Software are finding new ways to beat the odds stacked against them by the distribution and retail trades. By releasing dual-format Amiga and PC CD games and thus cutting development costs, could they be starting a new era for the Amiga games industry?



62 CDs on the Cheap



You'll find IDE CD-ROM software on this month's disks and cover CD, which along with our guide and a cheap CD drive is all you need to get hooked up for total CD-ROM compatibility. It's now cheaper and easier than ever, so whatever your budget, there's no excuse to miss out! All the details, prices and suppliers can be found starting on page 62.

News

Games

Get Serious – utilities and hardware

Public Domain

CD Amiga

Workshop

Monument Designer 48



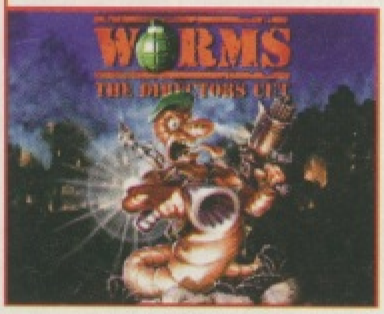
Teen Agent 27



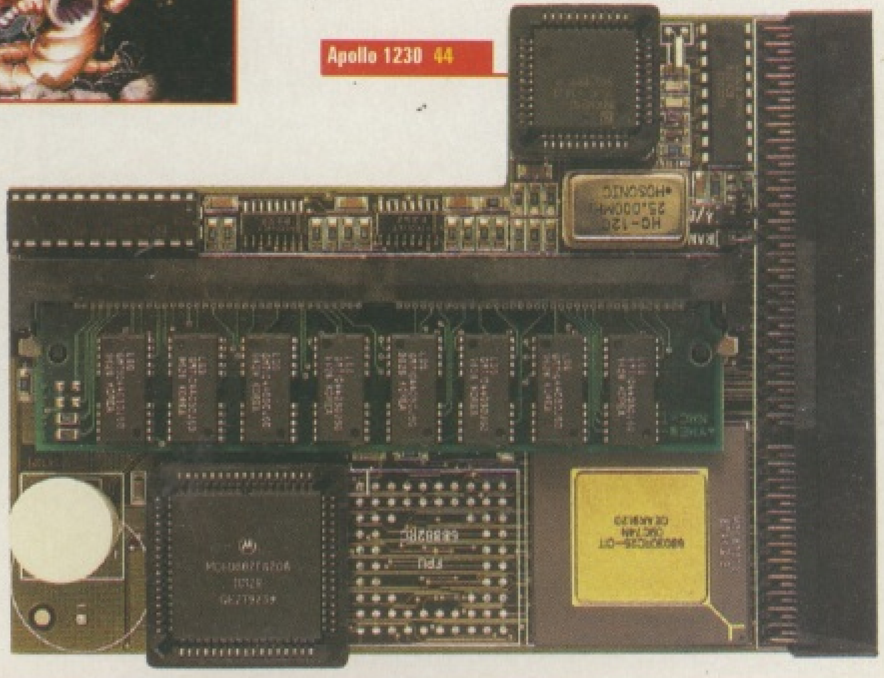
CD-ROM round-up 71



Worms - The Director's Cut 30



Apollo 1230 44



Cover Disks



6 Wordworth Test Drive and IDE CD-ROM software
Wordworth Test Drive is a fully working version of the classic word processor and it's on disk 146 (there's an even better version the CD edition with loads of clip art and fonts too). We've also got some excellent IDE CD-ROM software too.

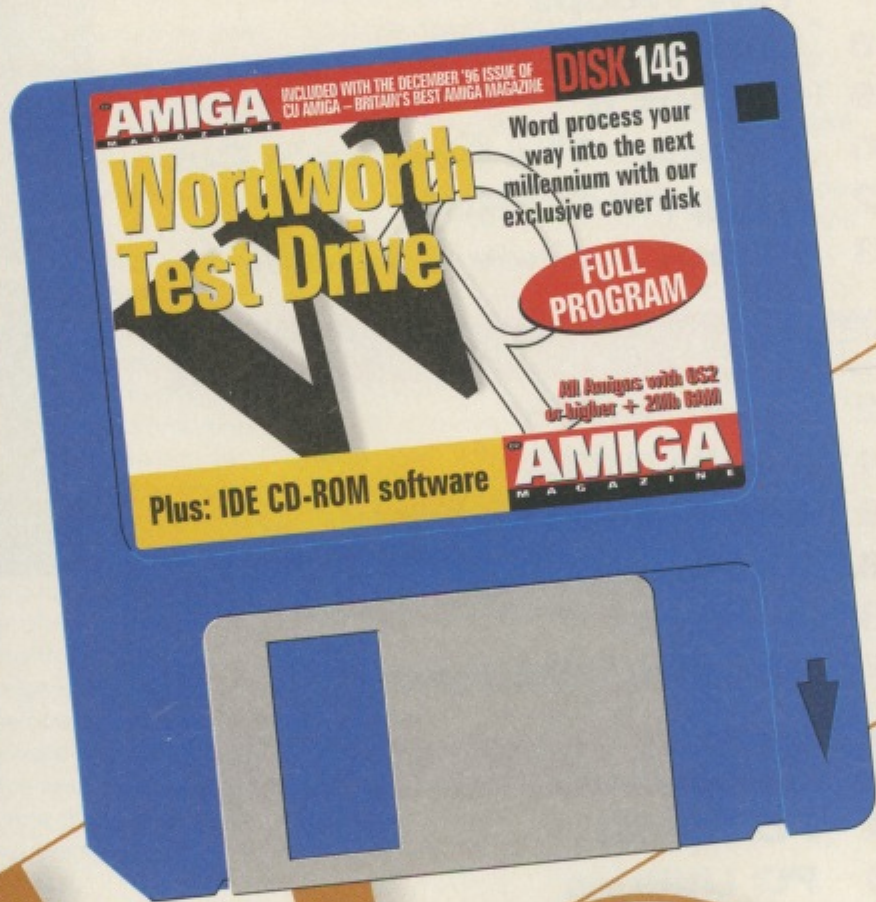
11 Worms - The Director's Cut
Now this is just brilliant. You know how good the original Worms is? Well this is much better. And it's got sheep-on-a-rope. And it's got fab AGA graphics. And there's loads of hidden extra weapons. And it's on this month's game cover disk! And now you should go and play it!

DISK 146
Wordworth Test Drive

It's got to be one of the most common things anyone would do on the Amiga. Word processing ranges from the simple act of writing letters all the way to producing full sized posters laden with colourful clip art. Either way, you need a word processing package to do it and that's just what we've included with this month's main covermount application program.

Digita's Wordworth has long been known as one of the Amiga's best word processor packages. On cover disk 146, you'll find Wordworth Test Drive. This is a special unrestricted version of Wordworth which we've managed to squeeze onto a single floppy disk.

The CD obviously has no such space considerations and so the full version of Wordworth 3.1 SE can be found there with extra Intellifonts and clipart . If decide to upgrade to CD-ROM, we have also included the ATAPI_PnP package on cover disk 146 to go with this month's 'CD on the Cheap' feature.



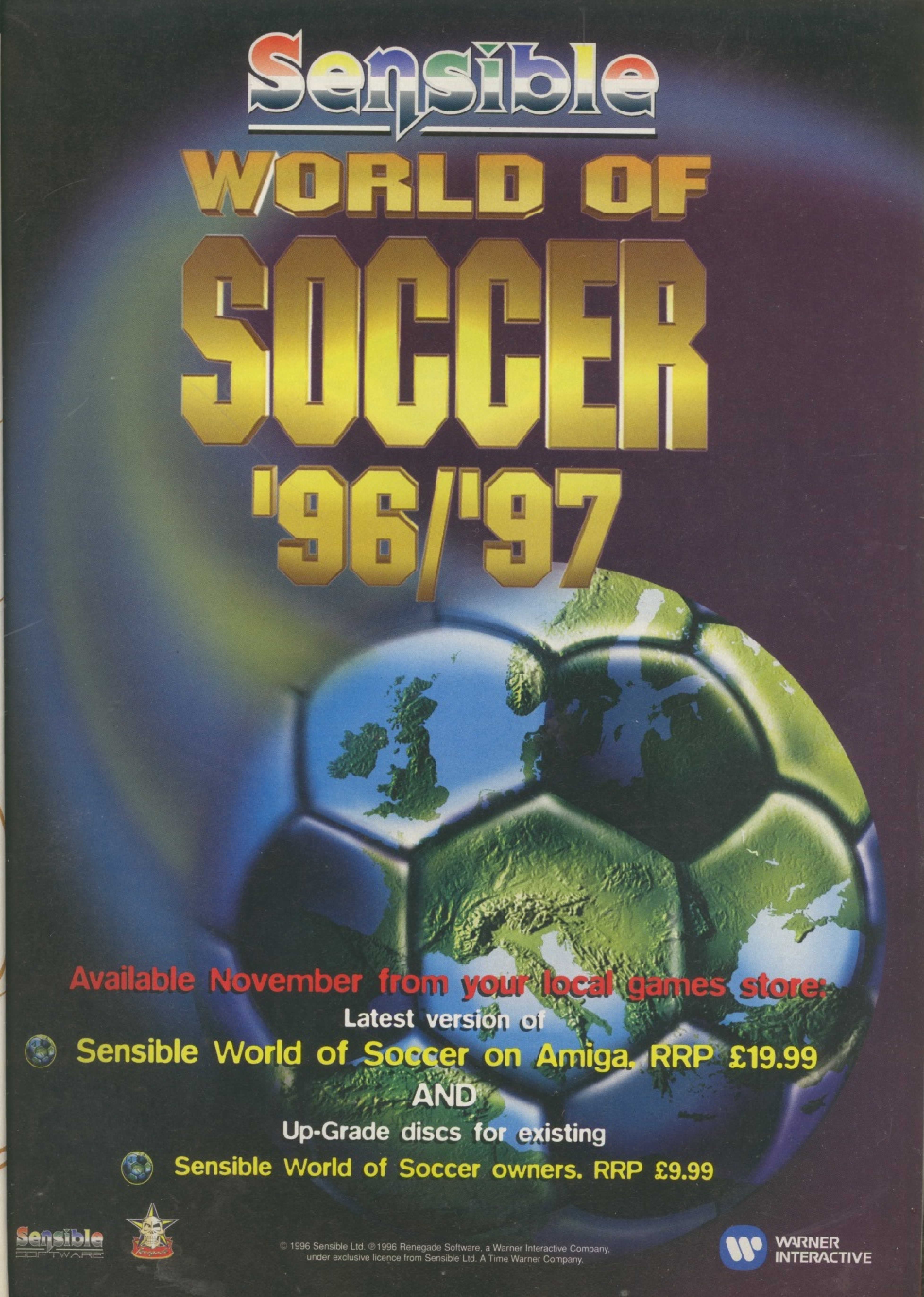
Floppy users get a nifty version of Wordworth that boots and works from a single disk, while CD users get the full Wordworth 3.1 release.

Here's a quick tutorial to get you used to the basic functions of Wordworth. There's a button bank down the left hand side of the Wordworth screen. The large icons perform basic operations so they can be reached quickly. The top page icon launches a new project so a new Wordworth window will appear with the same functions as the original Wordworth which enables multiple projects to be loaded at once. The next icon, a folder with an arrow point out, opens a new document. A file requester will appear asking for a document name.

Printing

Next a print function and a GUI will appear which wants to know the page range of a print and whether this is a draft or a letter quality output etc. Note, there's no printer drivers on the Wordworth Test Drive floppy disk so you will need to copy the one you from your Workbench: Devs/Printers/ into the Devs/Printers drawer on Wordworth. To select the printer drive, when inside the printer GUI, press the setup button and select your newly installed printer driver.

The scissors icon cuts any marked text out of the document. The two pages icon copies the marked text to the clipboard where the next icon pastes it back into the document. The second last icon is the all-important Font selector. Once activated fonts may be selected as well as the style and size.

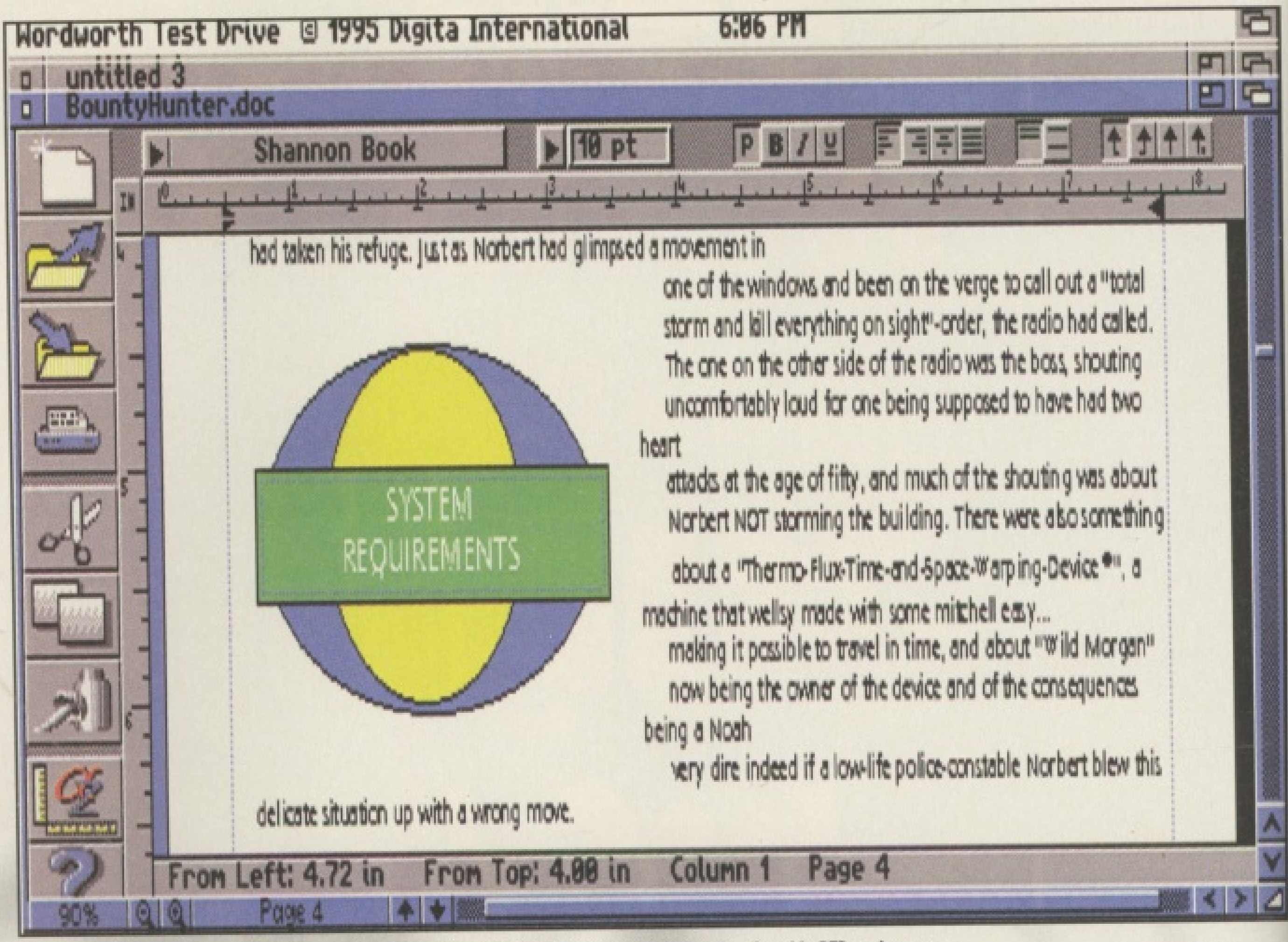

Sensible
WORLD OF
SOCCER
'96/'97
Available November from your local games store:
Latest version of
Sensible World of Soccer on Amiga. RRP £19.99
AND
Up-Grade discs for existing
Sensible World of Soccer owners. RRP £9.99
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under exclusive licence from Sensible Ltd. A Time Warner Company.
WARNER INTERACTIVE

The last icon activates Wordworth's on-line help function and starts on the contents. Help can also be accessed from the Help menu. Here you'll find in-depth help on all of the functions of Wordworth via the AmigaGuide system.

Projects

Creating a project is simple. Select 'New' from the Project menu and a new document will be created. Next go to the Object menu and select 'Create object'. Slide the requester down and select 'Text Frame' and press OK. Drag out a rectangle on the Wordworth screen so that it's longer horizontally, click out of the frame and then double click inside the frame. The 'Text Frame Information' window will appear allowing you to change the various properties of this object. Make fill colour red, border style double line and thickness 2pt.

Next, change the text flow to left. Close the window and click once on the box. Click the Font icon on the button bar on the left and make the text white and a size that will show but not too big. Type what you want and then click on the justify centre button on the top bar of Wordworth. It's the icon second from the right on the group of 4 buttons with little lines on them. You'll see you have the right button when the text you jut typed jumps into the centre of the box.



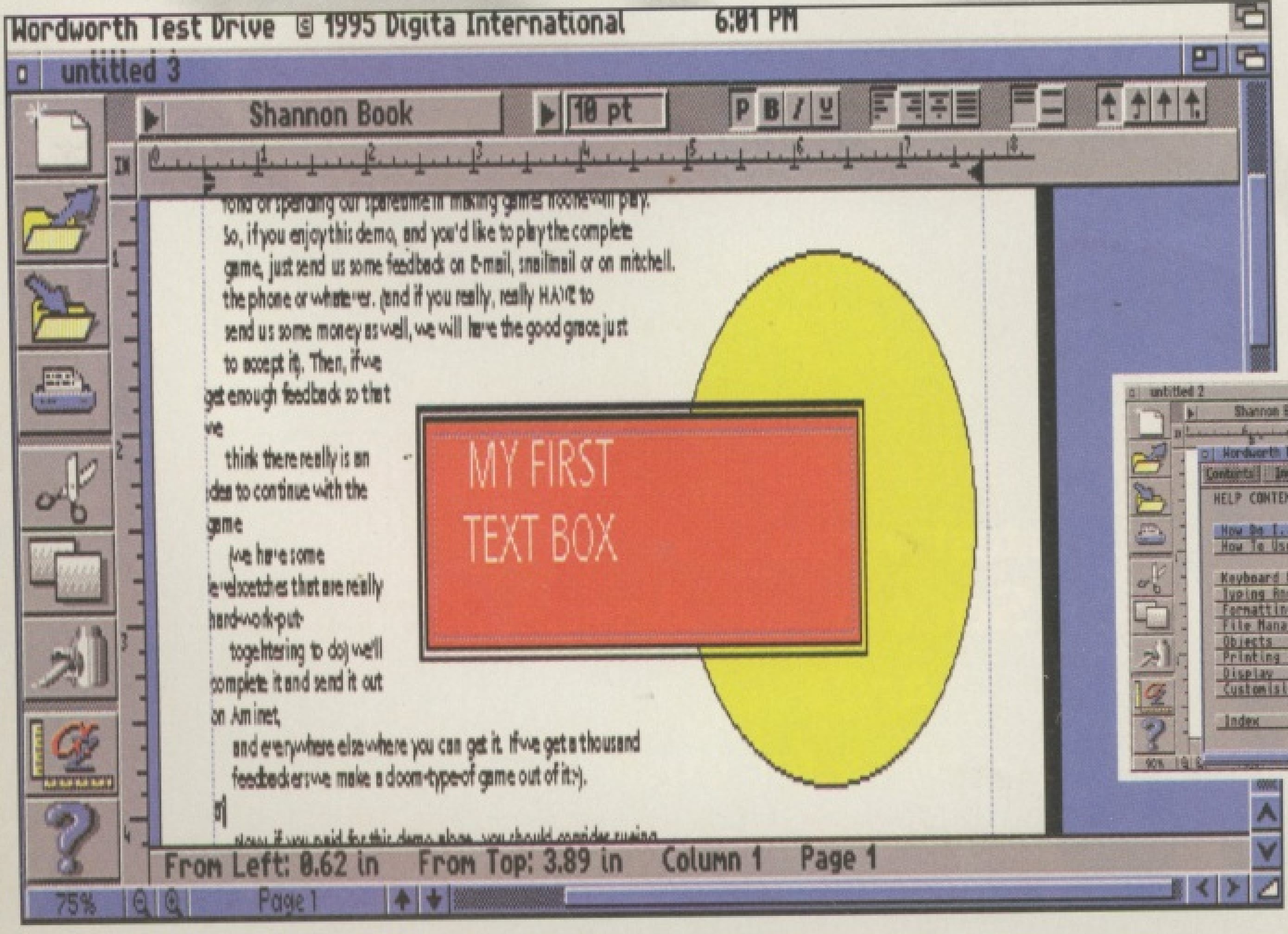
▲ Wordworth is much more than just a word processor, it's also capable of many features often found in DTP packages.

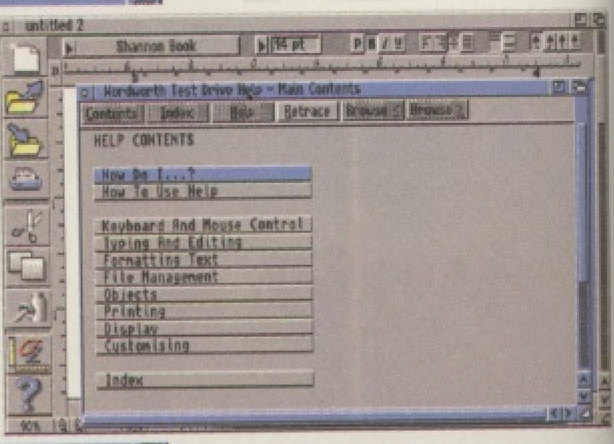
Open the 'Create object' window again but this time select 'Circle'. Drag out a circle that is as long vertically as the text box is wide. Resize it using the points in the circle, until you get it right. Then double click on it for the 'Circle Information' and change the flow to contour left. Go to the object menu and select send to back while the circle is selected. Move both the objects to the right hand side of the page. You should be able to type around the newly formed objects. In this way it's possible to create graphically impressive documents quickly and easily.

You're on your way to Wordworth perfection!

More on CD

If you've got the CD edition of this month's CU Amiga Magazine you be able to get even more from Wordworth. The extra space on the CD has allowed us to include the full version of Wordworth 3.1 along with a host of additional goodies, including a selection of Intellifonts and lots of clip art for you to spruce up your documents. If there's anything you're having particularly difficulties with concerning Wordworth, or you would like a particular feature explained in more detail, write to us at Wordworth Q+A, CU Amiga Magazine, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Look out for more on Wordworth in the next issue of CU Amiga Magazine.





▲ The on-line help is a God-send whenever you want to find out what a particular function does. Press the Help key at any time to view it.

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The Cool way to Grab Images on your Amiga

CHECK OUT OUR NEW... ProTel™, Sound Samplers and PCMCIA Interface



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Camcorder User commented... "If you're looking for a high resolution 24 bit digitiser then, at this price, ProGrab 24RT represents great value for money." — camcorder USER

ProGrab™ - Voted as **The Best Video Hardware** product for the Amiga. This is especially pleasing because the award comes from the Amiga Shopper magazine's readers... Our **Satisfied** Customers!

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ProGrab™ - Amiga Format **93% Gold Rating** and comments like... "ProGrab 24RT Plus is quite simply the digitiser to get", "Incredible value for money - no other digitiser offers so much for so little". When reviewing Vidi Amiga 24RT PRO, Amiga Format said "Save yourself £100 and buy the much superior Pro Grab"

CU Amiga said ProGrab™ is... *"Just the job for beginners and semi professionals on a tight budget" and "very hard to beat. For the money, nothing can touch it"* — AMIGA MAGAZINE

ProGrab 24RT Plus

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cover disks
Loading instructions



Disk number 146
Wordworth 3.1 SE

Write protect your Wordworth disk before doing anything else to avoid overwriting the original cover disk. Extracting Wordworth is simple, you first boot your own Workbench and then click on the 'Unpack_ WordWorth' icon. A DMS file will be copied to RAM and then written out to a blank floppy (this disk does not need to be formatted beforehand). You'll be prompted to insert a floppy disk and the self-booting Wordworth Test Drive floppy disk will be written to the blank disk. This disk must be left in the floppy drive and booted which will shortly load Workbench with Wordworth appearing a little while later without you having to do anything extra. You are now all set up for Wordworth. See page six for operation instructions and also take a look at the on-line help which should guide you through most areas of the program.

IDE CD-ROM Software

To complement our DIY CD-ROM feature, we've included ATAPI Plug n Play. This is fully working IDE CD-ROM driver software. To install it just click on its icon and follow the instructions. For more details on how to use it, see page 62.

IF YOUR DISK/CD WON'T LOAD

We go to great trouble to ensure that the CU Amiga Magazine cover disks will work on common Amiga models. However, if you do experience problems follow this simple guide.

1: Remove all unnecessary upgrades and peripherals, such as printers and modems. Some trapdoor expansions can also cause problems.

2: Follow the instructions on this and previous pages exactly.

3: Contact our 3.5 inch disk people: DISKXPRESS, 7 WILLOW COURT, BOURTON INDUSTRIAL PARK, BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL54 2HQ. TEL: 01451 810788.

SEA. Tel: 01451 810788. Email:100714.334@compuserve.com

If they advise that the disk is faulty, fill in your details in the form below, and send this form, along with the faulty cover disk and a 25p stamped self addressed envelope to:

CU Amiga Magazine Disk Returns, DISKXPRESS, 7 WILLOW COURT, BOURTON INDUSTRIAL PARK, BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL54 2HQ. TEL: 01451 810788.

We also vigorously virus check our cover disks on a branded virus checker. If some escape our attention we cannot assume responsibility for it.

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ADDRESS: ....

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TYPE OF AMIGA OWNED: ....DISK NUMBER: ....

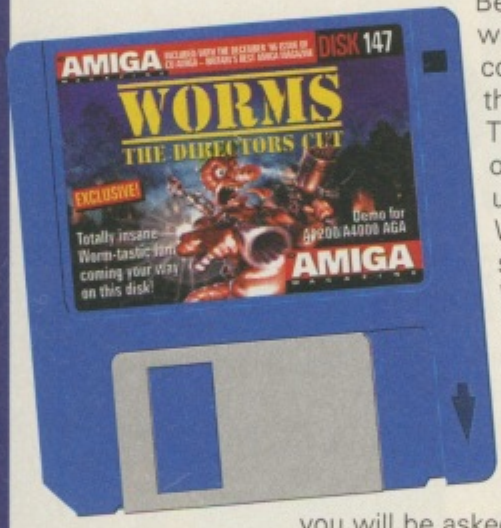
DESCRIBE EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY TO LOAD THE DISK:

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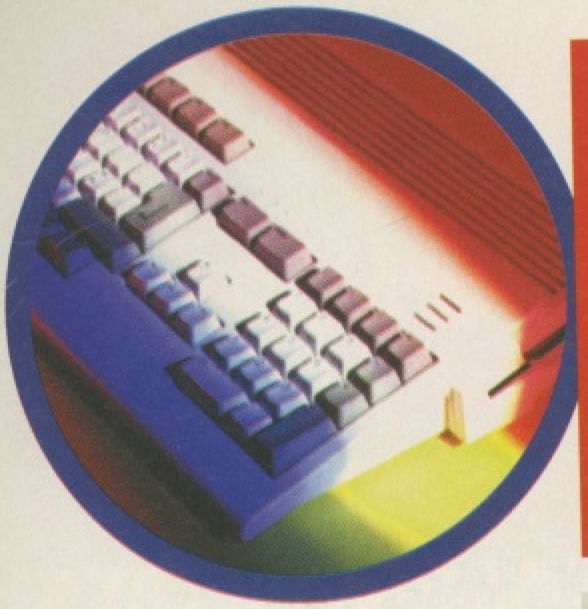
Disk number 147:
Worms – The Director's Cut



Before you do anything at all, write protect your original Worms cover disk, so that you can see through the hole in the corner. This stops you accidentally overwriting the disk during the unpacking process. Unpacking Worms – The Director's Cut is a simple affair. First load Workbench or boot from your hard drive. Now insert the Worms cover disk. Double click the disk icon and you'll see another icon which deals with all the unpacking. Double click this and after a short pause you will be asked to insert the first of your blank disks. Both of these blanks must be write enabled but there's no need to format them. Follow the on-screen instructions and change to the second disk when you're asked to do so. When the unpacking process is complete you can play Worms – The Director's Cut from your newly expanded game disks. Boot the first disk by inserting it into the internal floppy drive and resetting your Amiga. For those who have never played Worms before, the idea is simply to wipe out your opposing Worm armies before they do the same to you, using all kinds of weapons and tricks. See the review of the full game on page 28 for the full lowdown on the new tricks and weapons available in this version.

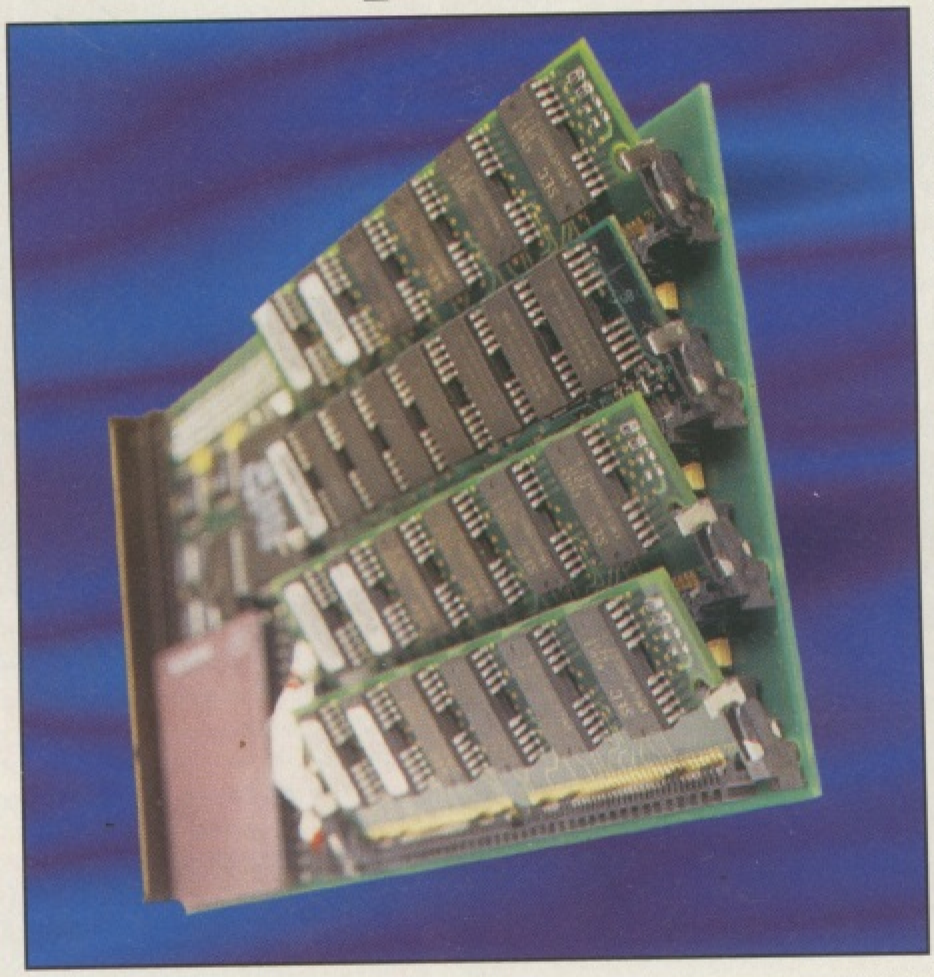






News

Blittersoft Drops Prices



Blittersoft have announced a number of price reductions on their Eagle Tower Amigas and Phase 5 accelerators. The A1200-based towers, made under licence from Amiga Technologies, range from the Eagle 1200TE at £599 to the 1200TE-60/50 at £999. The A4000-based models vary from the 4000TE priced at £1299 to the 4000TE-60/50 at £1749. Watch out for an in-depth look at the entire Eagle Tower range coming up very soon in CU Amiga Magazine.

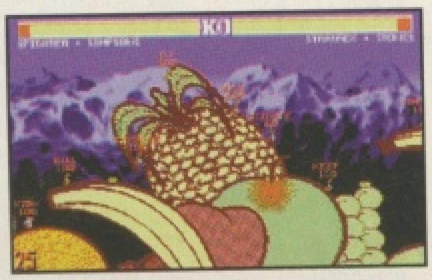
A whopping £120 has been sliced off the price of the CyberStorm Mk II 50Mhz 060 accelerator, which has dropped from £649.95 to £529.95. You can now also get a Blizzard 1260 (060/50) Turbo card for £479.95 while the Blizzard 1240T (040/40 EC) is available for £249.95. Add-on SCSI kits are also available for Blizzard and CyberStorm cards. For more information call Blittersoft on 01908 261 466.

World of Formula 1

Harnessing the raw adrenaline rush of a Formula 1 Grand Prix is no mean feat. Such a tall order in fact, that Apex Systems have decided to try simulating a different aspect of the sport, the bit where you sit in the pits wearing giant headphones looking into a TV screen. So, if you've always fancied having a crack at being Frank Williams rather than all the hustle and bustle of Damon Hill's job, this should be right up your pitlane. World of Formula 1, set for a March 97 release, will feature all the teams and drivers from the 1996 championship, which gives you the chance to emulate Hill's win or take control of any of the other drivers to alter the course of history.



Cheaper Worms





In a frenzy of Worm related activity, Team 17 are now making the original Worms available once more at a reduced price, £12.99, via the Hit Squad budget label. If you missed out the first time round, or you can't bring yourself to splash out on the wonderful new Director's Cut edition, here's your chance to get hold of it without making a dent in your wallet or raiding the piggy bank. Contact Team 17 on 01924 271 637 for more information.

World's Fastest Modem

Smashing the previous modem speed limits, US Robotics' new 'x2' technology allows transfer rates of 56Kbps over standard phone lines. While other developers have been working towards similar goals, US Robotics are the first to announce such a system that is up and running, with the all-important support from leading Internet service providers. Previous limits of 28.8 or 3.6 Kbps will soon be a thing of the past as the x2 technology will be made available as a software upgrade for Courier modems while Sportster modems will be able to upgrade via a replacement chip. Needless to say the x2 technology will be included as standard in future USR modems.

This breakthrough is yet another step forward for the mushrooming dial-up Internet scene which will benefit hugely from the more rapid transfer rates. For further information contact US Robotics on 01734 228200.

Stateside

By Jason Compton



A Pretium Plan

Innovative Digital Dynamics of Florida has announced the public release of its commercial personal finance software, Pretium. Designed to track up to 100 accounts simultaneously it can categorise various types of money. Pretium can also import and export Quicken files found on PC and Macs.

IDD is shipping Pretium now for US$55. A demo is online at the Pretium homepage, www.iag.net/~cstone/pretium. Or contact IDD on ++352-373-9471.

Survey Decides Imagine's Future

Uncertain as to the market potential for continued support for its Imagine raytracing/3D modelling package on the Amiga, US developers Impulse have decided to take the issue to the streets.

An independent and impartial survey is being conducted on behalf of Impulse to ascertain the overall demand and sales possibilities for a new version of the Imagine software.

Currently, much of Impulse's development efforts are aimed at the PC version of Imagine, which originated on pre-AGA Amigas.

If you want to become a part of the survey, please contact Mike Nixon of Intellipoint Corporation at mikenixon@gnn.com.

For more information on Imagine or Impulse's products, contact www.coolfun.com, or on ++612-425-0557.





Persistency Holds The Key To Emplant

Jim Drew, of Emplant Mac emulator and Utilities Unlimited infamy, is back. After Utilities Unlimited's owners (which apparently did not include Mr. Drew) put the company in bankruptcy, he and his Emplant development partner Joe Fenton have formed a new software company, Persistence, dedicated to Amiga emulation technologies. They are promising delivery of a high-tech PC emulator in due course, and all business is to be directed through Utilities Unlimited's long-time UK distributor, Blittersoft.

Support will continue for existing Emplant products, although special emphasis will be placed on 'Emplant Lite', the Mac emulation software that does not need the original Emplant hardware.

More information on Persistence or Blittersoft can be found on their Web site, http://blittersoft.wildnet.co.uk.

Midwest Amiga Exposition A Success

The AmiCon User Group of Ohio held their Midwest Amiga Exposition on October 19th and 20th and treated hundreds of Amiga users to a successful weekend dedicated to their favourite computer.

Users came from across the country to meet one another and peruse the offerings of such companies as Nova Design, whose show stock of ImageFX was sold out by 1 PM the first day as onlookers were captivated by the talents of noted Amiga artist Corinna Cohn. Also on display were the 'almost-production' units of the PAWS Amiga 1200 portable kit from Silent Paw, as well as their own rendition of an Amiga 4000 portable case. A number of user groups brought coalitions to exhibit or visit the show – of note was the Gateway Amiga Club table, which was promoting the upcoming Gateway Amiga '97 show in March, to be held in St. Louis, Missouri. The software company Neather Realm was on hand showing off their productivity tools for the Amiga and taking orders for their upcoming Blitz Basic programming guide.

In addition, Wonder Computers International brought a small contingent across the border from Canada to promote their upcoming World of Amiga show, to be held in Toronto on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of December.

The show also featured a number of talks and a roundtable discussion which featured Eric Schwartz of Amiga art and 'Amy the Squirrel' fame, Don Hicks, editor of Amazing Computing, Shawn Randolph from Silent Paw, Jason Compton, Mark Habinski from Wonder, Kermit Woodall, VP of Nova Design, and Randhir Jesrani of Compuquick, the area's Amiga dealer.

The show kept spirits high even in the dreary Columbus weather. Show organisers had a number of door prizes to give away, and one user group put a new A1200 up for raffle – won by none other than AmiCon president Ronn Black.

The Midwest Amiga Exposition sets a good tone for the US market heading into the final Amiga events of the year in Toronto – Amiga Fest and World of Amiga. Plans are now being made all over for 1997 events.

For more information check out http://www.amicon.org.

Boston's Splinter Groups Go It Alone

One of America's largest independent and non-profit computing institutions, the Boston Computer Society, has ceased to be after the board of directors recently dissolved the non-profit corporation.

The BCS boasted a variety of user group organisations under its large organisational umbrella. Many of these, including the separate Commodore 8-bit and Amiga groups, have pledged that they will continue on without the parent organisation. In this time of shaky faith among some users of the Amiga, it's nice to see this sort of perseverance.

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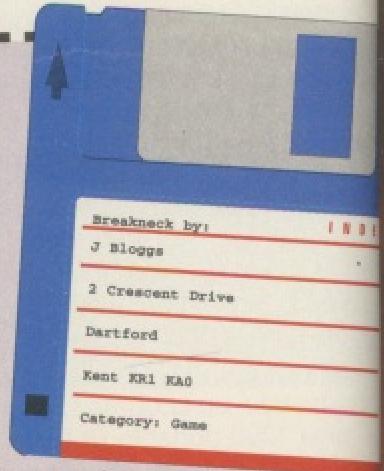
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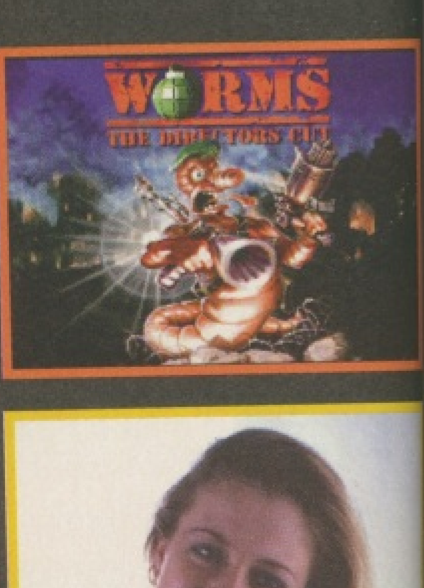
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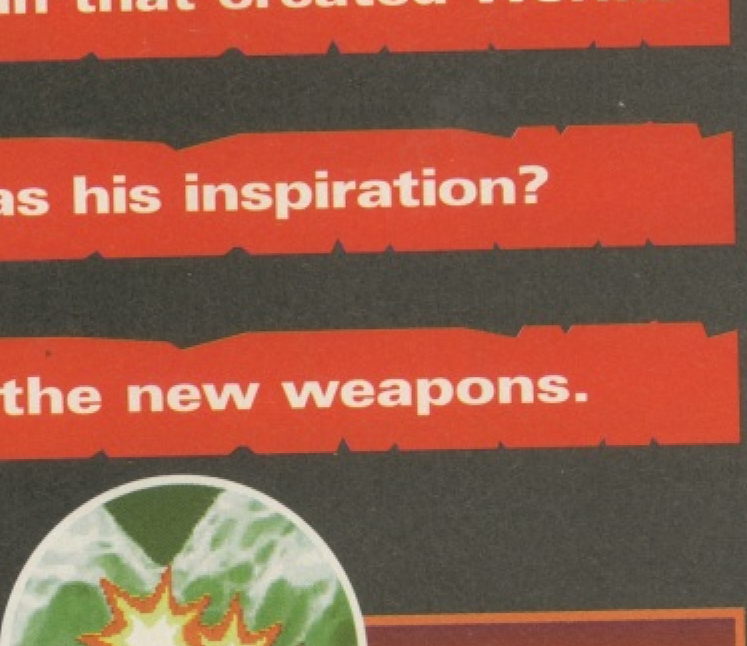
1 Who was the man that created Worms?

2 What animal was his inspiration?

3 Name three of the new weapons.



We've got five copies of Worms – The Director's Cut and matching T-shirts to give away. Yes Andy Davidson, Worms creator, has once again looked to his magic donkey for inspiration and come up with some wonderful new ideas and weapons for this latest version of Worms. New weapons include: baseball bats, super sheep, sheep on a rope, holy hand grenades, doddering old ladies and many, many more. But we're not allowed to tell you all the new features here because we don't want to spoil your fun. You've got to discover them for yourself and believe us you won't be disappointed.



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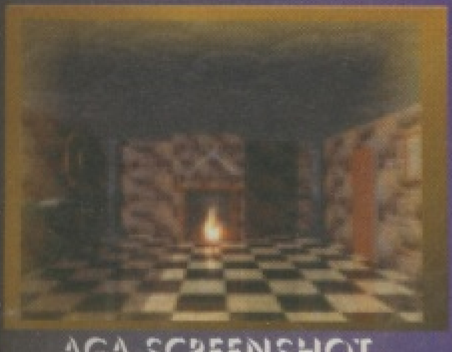
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The best of both worlds

Lack of retail support is forcing many software companies away from the Amiga to the PC. However, there is a way around having to make that difficult decision as we found out.





▲ Pinball Prelude, which was very successful on floppy is the first game to brought out on the new dual format CDs.

Let's face facts. Less and less quality software is coming out for the Amiga. This isn't because there isn't a market for it. God knows there are hoards of Amiga owners out there desperate for good quality software. However, high street retail shops aren't as convinced. Trying to find any of the current releases in any shop is now becoming almost impossible. PC software, however, although not any better or popular is now replacing Amiga products in the shops. In Europe and Germany in particular, however, Amiga products are storming off the shelves and software companies are inundated with requests for software.

So what is to be done to achieve the same healthy sales in the UK market? We look at one company who seems to have come up with a novel solution.

> **"We feel that there is no more demand for floppies any more."**

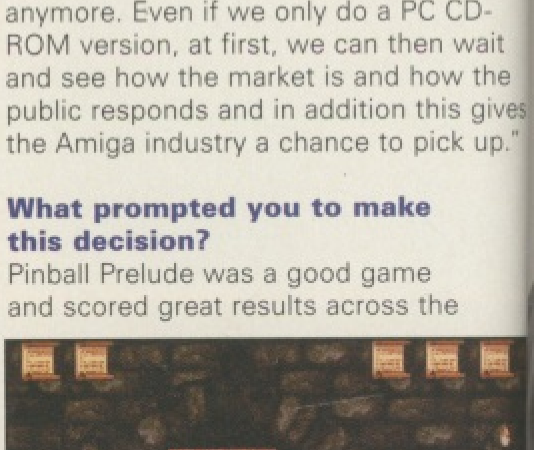
Effigy Software, the company behind Pinball Prelude and XP8 are diehard fans of the Amiga and if they had their way would only produce Amiga games. However, financial constraints and lack of retail support is forcing them to concentrate their game development on the PC. However, the team behind game development; Ian Jenkins, Philip Sharpe, Valan Chan and Graham Gray are loathe to do this. So they have come up with a good idea to keep the Amiga software side alive: producing games on a dual format CD. Impressed by this initiative CU Amiga Magazine went to see the MD Ian Jenkins in his rustic hideaway in Lincolnshire to find out more.

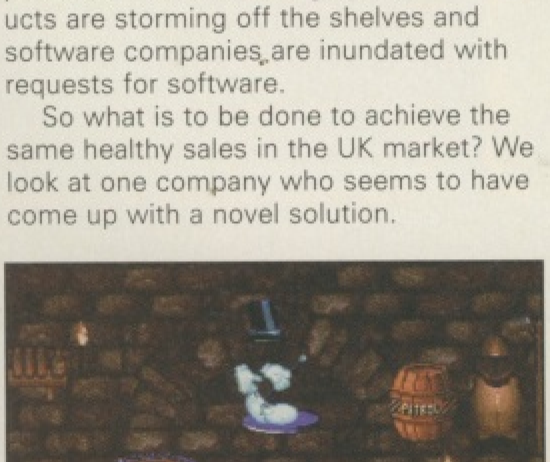
What does this unique Dual format mean for the Amiga on the whole?

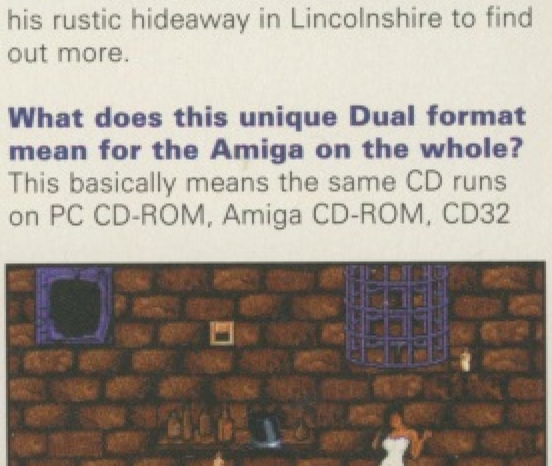
This basically means the same CD runs on PC CD-ROM, Amiga CD-ROM, CD32 and there are even floppies in the same box for PC owners without a CD drive. We will use that to gauge the market by releasing the PC version first, as we feel that there is no more demand for floppies anymore. Even if we only do a PC CD-ROM version, at first, we can then wait and see how the market is and how the public responds and in addition this gives the Amiga industry a chance to pick up."

What prompted you to make this decision?

Pinball Prelude was a good game and scored great results across the

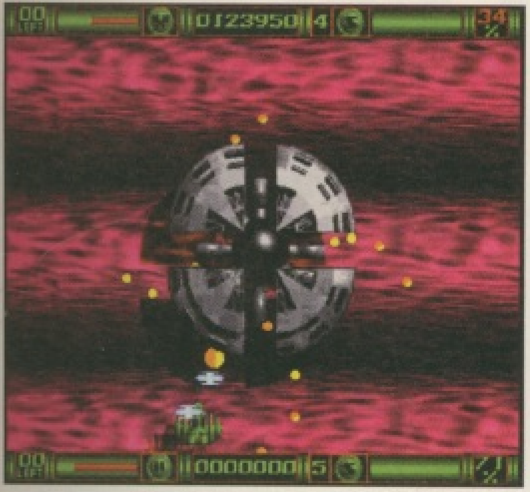


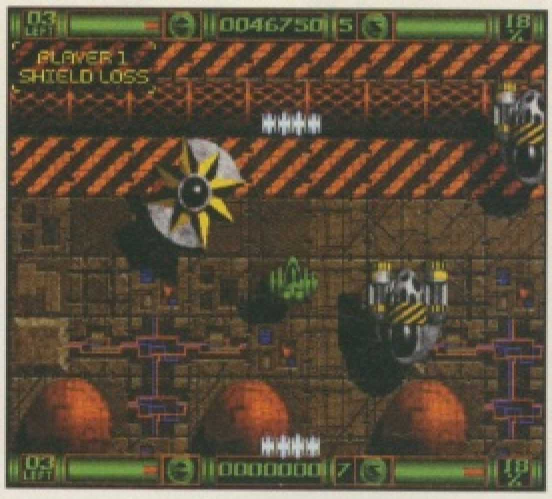






▲ Effigy's next release Necromantics shown here, is a 3D puzzle game.







Amiga magazines but I recorded that there were more sales on the A500/ A600 sales than the AGA version which was far better. I suspect that that this is due to heavy piracy and that most AGA owners were on the Internet with their big hard drives and modems downloading all the stuff that came free from people abusing the system. The hard facts are that if you don't sell X amount of games or unless you don't buy it, it won't make any money or royalties, it that's simple."

"We believe that demos people create and put into PD are useless."

What are you currently working on for this format?

"We've already released Pinball Prelude on this format (see review this issue) and we're working on a game called Ffigy that has been development since last October but really we started it ages ago, so I guess it's been in 15 months of development."

Tell us more about Ffigy?

"Ffigy is our own in-house development game project. It's a crazy creation, a cartoony baloney brainteaser which requires you, as the 'Ffigy controller', to release imprisoned Ffigys, while avoiding the predators a disdainful bunch of muggers disguised in Circus type clothing and armed with a variety of weird weapons with which they are bent on destroying these bashful cuddly characters."

So you want to sort of invent a new genre of game altogether like Bullfrog did with their Populous and Powermonger 'God' games?

"We feel you won't be able to typecast Ffigy. It's a highly unusual game. It's a control game. We want game players to pay a very deep game and at the same time have a lot of fun indeed"

How do plan to market Ffigy?

"We'll be using five or six techniques for our games like radio, TV, newspapers, even merchandise, to get the Ffigy character up and running."

What other games do you have on the cards?

"Necromantics is our next planned November release."

-Tell us what Necromantics is all about then?

"Well, it's basically a pseudo 3D scrolling puzzle game with a difference. There are killer ants puzzling ponderations much brain teasing spondiferal dexterity required in hard mode (softies only play the easy levels)."



Have you got anything else lined up at the moment?

"Weathermine Software's Anthony Denton and Mathew Waters are currently working on the non-AGA version of XP8 which has the same five levels of the AGA version but with reduced, cut down in graphics and less sound effects but it's still very playable."

Given then that the software side is difficult and you've come up with the idea of dual format to combat this what else do you think is the key to the Amiga's survival?

"What we need obviously is not just a new machine but a continuation of the Amiga's history.

"We also believe that demos that people create and put into Public Domain are useless and are not the way forward. We need to see that there is a profit in it!"

"So with this in mind, I think that the Power PC chip is the way to go for not just processing power, but for its accessible emulation capabilities and its ability to nestle nicely into the highly successful multimedia market of the PC." ■

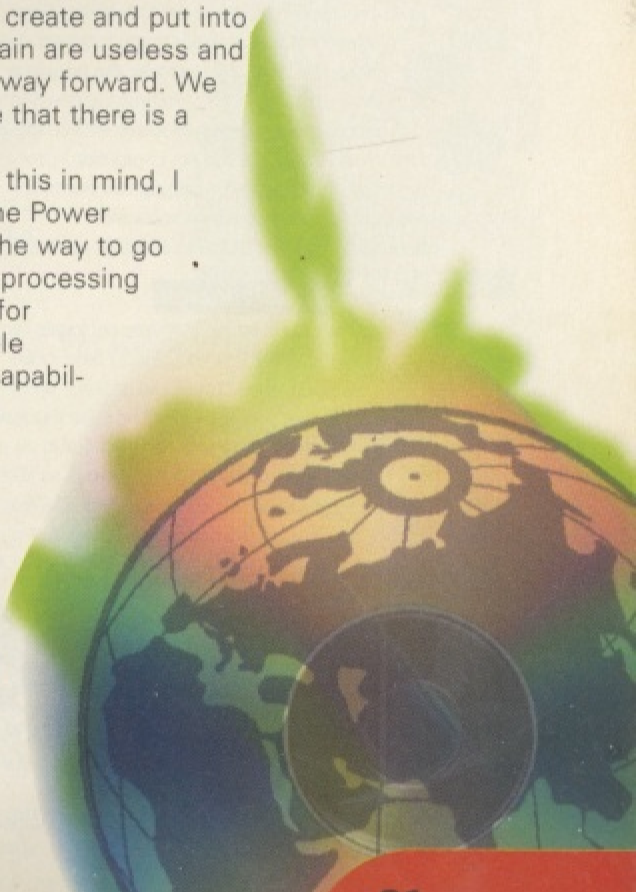
Mark Forbes



■ **Top Left and centre: we should see a non AGA version of XP8 soon.**



■ **Top right and two pics below: some more glimpses of Pinball Prelude CD.**



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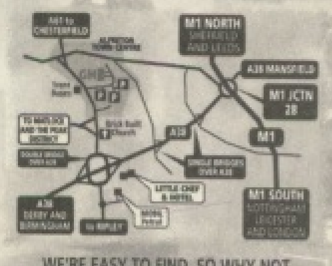
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Screen Scene



Yessss. Worms – the Director's Cut is finally here. And it's totally brilliant. Turn to page 30 now to see for yourself and then play the demo on this month's cover disk. Superb. It's made our Christmas already.

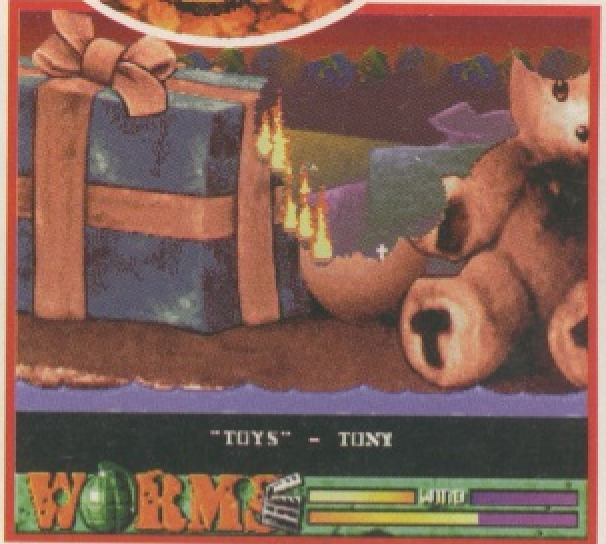


Enigma 27

Previews

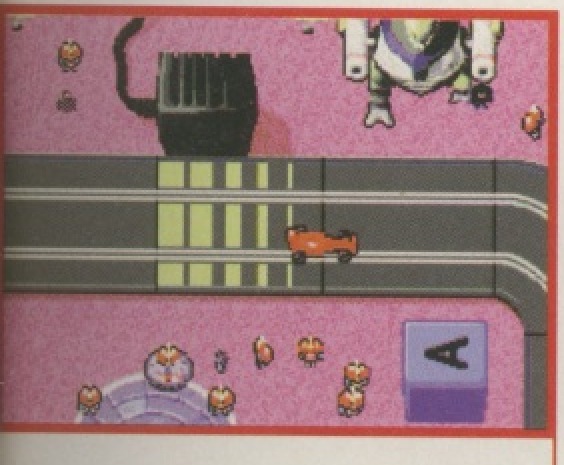


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Teen Agent

■ DFR: TBA ■ Publisher: Guildhall Leisure ✆ 01302 890 000

Guildhall Leisure are back with us again. After a period of absence, one of the main saviours of the Amiga games scene are preparing to launch another Amiga game. This time it's an adventure game.

If you liked the Monkey Island games, you'll love Teen Agent. Although it may share the same name as the movie starring 21 Jump Street's Richard Grieco, the similarities end there. Teen Agent is more like a Naked Gun game, without the license and is a point 'n' click comic comedy adventure in the style of James Bond. It's really a spy spoof, with lots of gags, in the style of the 007 movies where you get to rescue lots of sexy damsels (007 had all the best jobs) and speak to strange men dressed in black.

Alex Amsel, the man who brought us the wonderfully playable Extreme Racing is behind the game and he revealed to CU Amiga Magazine that there will be not one but three versions of the game; an AGA (with 256 colours) floppy, ECS (almost 256 colours, but more like pseudo AGA) floppy, and a dual format CD version that will carry both the PC/Amiga version.

The AGA and ECS disk versions will be on five to six disks but can be installed on the hard drive. While the CD version will be essentially the same as the AGA version, Alex said that it should have full speech and long interludes of spy style music.

Although, strangely enough the CD version will not work with the CD32 due to problems of trying to get the CD32 to function properly. Hopefully, the programmers may find a way around this and we could see a version on the CD32.

Teen Agent certainly sounds like fun and there are a lot of worse ways to spend your time. But can it be as successful as previous classic adventures on the Amiga? Let's hope so.

Well, we will be able to see whether it's going to be a corker or not soon and you'll be able to judge for yourselves when CU Amiga Magazine will investigate the game in full in the next month or so. Until then keep your spy glass well polished and your dark glasses in a safe place. ■

Mark Forbes



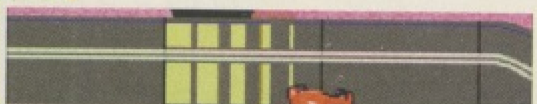
Tiny Troops



■ DFR: December ■ Publisher: Vulcan Software ✆ 01705 670 269

God bless 'em. Those people at Vulcan software just keep chucking those games out at us. This time we're being treated to an action type affair, Tiny Troops. You may remember that it was due to be released, some time back, by another publisher but it never got to park its bum on any of the high street shops' shelves. Now, it's nearly here and we may even see it in its finished form before Christmas.





In theory, Tiny Troops sounds a little like Vulcan's other game Timekeepers in that you've got an army of men at your disposal to do battle with against your sworn enemy. However, that's where the similarity between the two games ends. Tiny Troops is less of a puzzle game and more of an action/strategy sim. And at this stage, it looks a lot more colourful (see screenshots for proof) than Time Keepers, the sprites are much bigger and the backgrounds are a lot more varied.

The plot is simple enough, you decide at the start of each mission how many men you're going to need for each battle. (A nice friendly colonel throws a few handy hints at you beforehand as to the best tactics). Then it's up to you to decide your strategy from then on.

So good, so far. The demo version we received looked fine but I had some difficulty with the controls. So, I'll have to reserve my final judgement until the finished version comes in. We should have a full review for you next month. ■

Lisa Collins

Enigma

■ **DFR: TBA** ■ **Publisher: TBA**





Not to be confused with the OTM game Enigma, this little gem of an adventure game has winged its way half way across the world, from our ozzy cousin Peter Spinaze. Currently seeking a publisher, this game is looking excellent, so far, and any publisher out there would be mad not to snap it up.

The demo that we were sent looks very promising. It's a top down affair based on a dude armed with a crossbow, who looks like something from Jason and the Argonauts. In fact you're as playing Theseus, in his legendary minotaur, maze, and seven beautiful girls type caper.

The graphics are superbly detailed, with some slick animation and neat touches such as imprisoned women who plead to Theseus as he walks through magic psychedelic tunnels.

After a couple of minutes playing the demo you realised that Enigma is a well blended mix of Chaos Engine and Time-Keepers. We've been told that the final version will have a randomised map that is different every time you play and a Doom style first person perspective section, with many more features than the demo we previewed. If these promises are kept and the final game is as silky as the demo then this could be a plate smashing success. ■

Mark Mitchell





Cygnus 8

■ DFR: TBA ■ Publisher: Applaud Software
© 01283 217 270

Wouldn't it be nice to go back to those days when you could swop a nice friendly heifer for a bag of hay or a sack of potatoes? No more fiddling about at the bottom of a purse trying to find some coppers. Well, now you can thanks to Cygnus 8: Applaud Software's new adventure game. But don't get too confused by the retro bartering system, Cygnus 8 is not set in the golden olden days, it takes place in a futuristic cosmos full of weird and wonderful planets. And bartering is just one thing that you will get up in this game. You see, you've got a series of missions ahead of you which will test your business acumen as well as survival skill. You'll soon be zapping from planet to planet wheeling and dealing with the best of 'em and even robbing the odd bank or too along the way. But I won't give too much away at this early stage, you'll have to wait and see.







But I can say that as well as relying on your business savy to get you by you'll also be zipping around in a little spaceship bumping off asteroids and picking up valuable gems as you go.

Cygnus 8 is Applaud Software's second commercial game, DNA (reviewed last month) being their first. So, we're keen to see what this genre of game for them will have to offer. ■

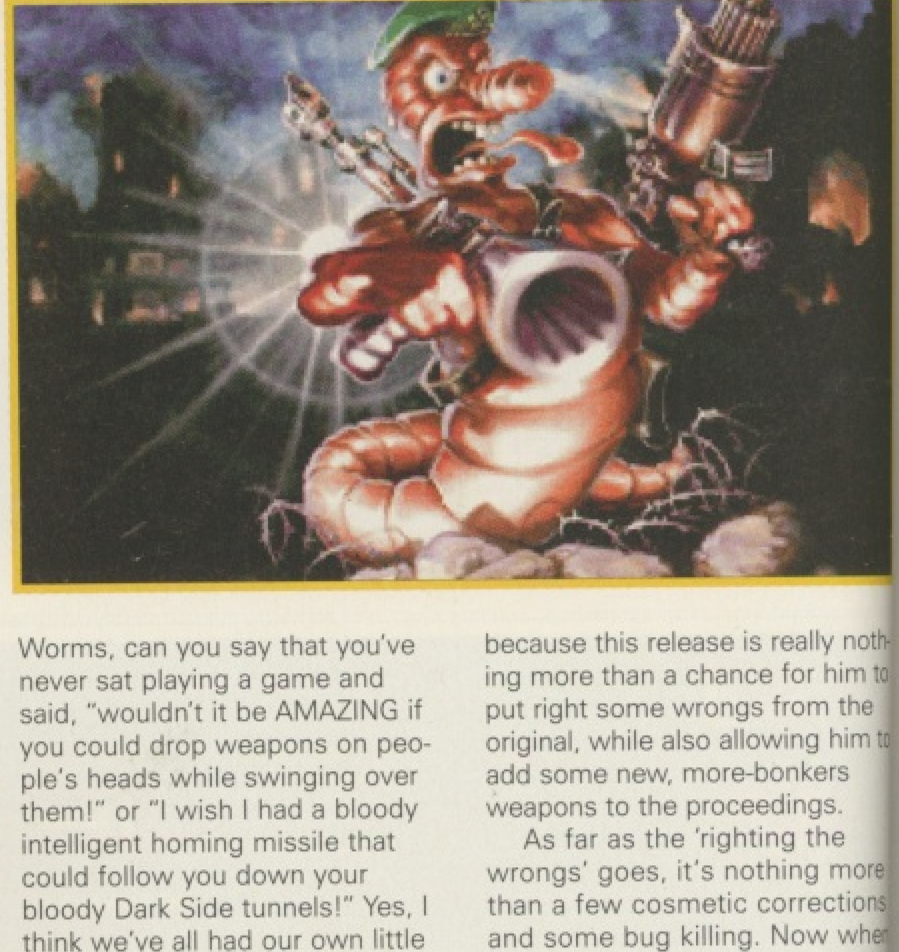
Lisa Collins



WORMS THE DIRECTORS CUT

AMIGA MAGAZINE SUPERSTAR

■ **Price: £29.95** ■ **Publisher: Team 17 © 01924 267776**



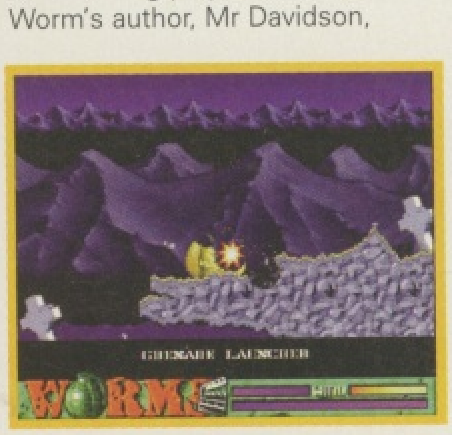
Yeah! Like Worms is so 'broke' it really needs fixing, eh? Still, there's always room for improvement...

So what was wrong with the original Worms that needs fixing? Well, let's be honest, nothing. It was, still is, and probably always will be one of the most playable games ever. I've always wondered how Sting must feel when he writes a 'classic'. You know, songs like Every Breath You Take, or Message in a Bottle. I mean, what's it feel like to create something that will forever be referred to? Andy Davidson must know that now, because as sure as we forever refer back to Pacman, Galaga and Donkey Kong in our sad, retro-way, you can be sure that ten years from now (when my goatee is long and grey) we'll be quaffing space beer in a virtual reality pub recalling the 'good old days and Worms' (and won't it be funny when the retro-nostalgia compilation releases include titles like Worms and Gloom!)

OK, I'll abandon my pointless musings for now, and instead ask you to do something for me. Now be honest ... as much as you love Worms, can you say that you've never sat playing a game and said, "wouldn't it be AMAZING if you could drop weapons on people's heads while swinging over them!" or "I wish I had a bloody intelligent homing missile that could follow you down your bloody Dark Side tunnels!" Yes, I think we've all had our own little ideas during play, and so has Worm's author, Mr Davidson, because this release is really nothing more than a chance for him to put right some wrongs from the original, while also allowing him to add some new, more-bonkers weapons to the proceedings.

As far as the 'righting the wrongs' goes, it's nothing more than a few cosmetic corrections and some bug killing. Now when you tunnel or dig, you no longer leave nasty-looking gaps that give the impression that the cave really ought to, er... cave in. Oh no, now the landscape has two layers: so dig away, safe in the knowledge that all you'll do is uncover the 'inner background'. A silly little addition, I know, but one that does a lot for the presentation.

Other odds and sods have been included, again doing nothing more than making the game look nicer. Use the blow torch and a spray of dust will fly out the passageway behind you, call in an airstrike and the explosions will gout fire as well as devastate the landscape. That sort of thing.



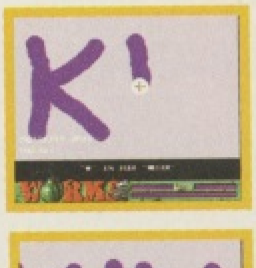


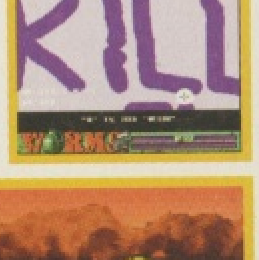
Bloody vandals

The landscape creation has also evolved, with some new terrain types and a lot more control for

Graffiti road

The new graffiti mode allows the player to draw a crude outline for any desired level. You can change the size of the cursor if you want to get into detail, as well as chose which terrain type will be used. Once happy with your creation, press the Return button and Mr Amiga will fill in the gaps for you. There's also an option to invert the screen, so use the cursor to draw a system of tunnels, invert the screen and you have a corking underground level!







You crazy Worms

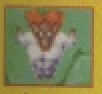
There are tons and tons of new and hidden weapons to play with, and though I don't want to spoil all the fun you'll have discovering them for yourself, I can't resist showing you some of them ...

BASEBALL BAT



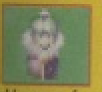
Though you could argue that the baseball bat does exactly the same as the Dragon Ball, there's something very satisfying about moving up to an enemy, taking aim, winding back and then smashing them in the back of the head! Even better, knock them off-screen with this and an unseen crowd roars its approval and you get a "HOME RUN!" flash.

SUPER SHEET



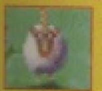
Yes, those fluffy fellas have evolved into a master race of lamb chops! While this sheep deploys as before, a tap on the space bar produces a cape and off into the sky he flies! You can now direction him over your target before pressing space to return him to normal, where upon he drops like, well ... like a sheep from the sky really. BOK!

OLD WOMEN



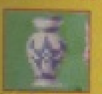
Tsch, I dunno, where they get these ideas from but they're good aren't they! You get ten seconds of a moaning, mumbling, doddering old woman for you money, before she wanders into someone and explodes!

SHEEP ON A ROPE



See an enemy across the screen but don't want to move from your position? Simple, just use new Sheep-O-Rope™ from Ronco! You control the sheep as if it were yourself, and then, once in position, detonate!

MING VASE



This valuable ornament should be used like a Mine or Dynamite (ie drop it and then run!) only with the added bonus of having exploding shards as well as an initial explosion.

POSTAL STRIKES



Similar to airstrikes (only more humourous) this will send a drifting wad of letters on their way, spreading out as explosions blow them across the landscape.

HOMING PIGEONS



These faithful feathered friends are every tunnel-dweller's nightmare! They're like intelligent homing missiles that, once set free, can negotiate changing terrain to find their target.

MAD COWS



God speed my lovely heifers! Yes, mad they are, and more than happy to trundle off towards any beef-lover on the level. And guess what? They then explode. Great!

HOLY HAND GRENADE



A devastating new weapon with the power of our lord Jesus behind it (yeah, sure). This works exactly as a standard grenade, only with a set three second fuse and a low bounce. best of all is the sampled 'Hallelujah!' that accompanies the explosion – along with the 100 points of damage that it inflicts. Powerful, non?

the user. The most obvious addition to the proceedings is the new Graffiti mode, where the player can take control of the cursor and draw himself a custom level, complete with as many silly features as he wants. You can then assign a terrain type to your creation and sit back while the program fills in the gaps and makes everything pretty for you. Create a corker of a level and you can even save your baby to disk for use another day. Should you find the graffiti drawing too crude, you can import your own customised landscapes using a paint package such as DPaint. Following the well-explained guide supplied with the game (ie sizes and colour translations). And while we're on the subject of using levels over and over, you can now chose to play an entire match on the same landscape without repairing damage done in previous rounds. Needless to say, with four teams playing, by the last few round there are very few trees, bridges, and well ... any landscape at all left really!

You can also set the worms to take unused weapons from round to round with them. This means that the strategy goes that one step forward, with players hoarding weapons for those all important last few rounds.



Total control

Young Mr Davidson has gone to town as far as player control goes, allowing the user to alter just about every aspect of the game. As well as turning weapons on and off – as you could before – you can also chose to disable certain weapons until a set point in the game. If you always hated how much damage an early airstrike did to unorganised troops, simply disable it until, say, turn #3.

You can also alter the odds on which landscape will appear, upping the ratio of your favourites against your least favourites – or simply banning the ones you hate! Alter the sensitivity of mines; the damage each weapon inflicts, and even how many times you can fire off your new improved rope to Tarzan across the ceiling (ah, but I haven't mentioned that yet; have I!)

Oh yes, it's all change on the rope front. Apart from having a greater reach, a particularly splendid addition to this tool is that you can act out all your Spiderman fantasies. By pressing the space bar while swinging you send out another rope and 'Tarzan' across the terrain. Though you might not think this all that great, that's before I tell you about the new cavern levels. Yes, that's right, one out of every four levels (unless you change the default) is a cave level that has a complete roof. This means that, not only do you have to be more careful with arcing weapons, but the rope takes over as the most important thing ever! Oh, and did I mention that you can now drop a stick of dynamite while swinging over somebody? Yes, I think you're beginning to get the idea now!



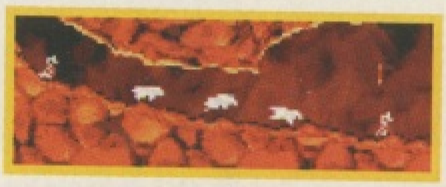
▲ Yes: the sheep strike once again. This time it's a lovely lamb chop dive into the cute and cuddly teddy bear's cranium.



So much more

Well to be honest there's chock-loads more, but there's more fun to be had finding all of the new touches by playing the game than just reading some fool go on and on about it, but I think you can see that, while this is an exercise in improving an already great product, it's also a chance to let your hair down and just have a good laugh. Come up against some dead-serious player who's perfected his bazooka shooting and you can simply send an old woman his way (I kid you not) or perhaps order a herd of mad cows to attack. And the best thing about all these crazy weapons is that they're not just dumped in your lap, you have to search for them and, after each match, you'll be given a code that allows you to keep what you've found when you come to play next time – searching for the new toys as you go. Now it's not just brilliant fun, it's progressive brilliant fun. This is truly classic stuff. ■

Matt Broughton





▲ Those not so friendly heifers are at it again. Better run for your life before you're BSED.

WORMS THE DIRECTORS CUT

workbench version	AGA only
number of disks	4
RAM	2Mb
hard disk installable	yes

A500 · A500+ · A1200 · A4000

graphics	90%
sound	88%
lastability	91%
playability	91%

OVERALL
Still the most playable game ever! **91%**

Kang FU CD

■ Price: £24.99 + P&P ■ Publisher: Greed
■ Contact: ALTER interservice Halgegracht 68 7607 EE Almelo the Netherlands





Yes, indeed, it's cutesy platformer time once again. After two years of development, Kang FU a colourful action/ platformer from Great Effects Development (GREED) in Holland is here.

The game's plot is simple enough. Skippy's Dutch cousin has to find or collect as many baby kangeroos as possible as he hops through through the landscapes to the exit. Lots of nasties such as cockerels, dragons, wasps and even flying umbrellas, are out to stop him though. Luckily, our hero Klont, being your all-dancing, all-kicking, highly manoeuvreable kangaroo, has loads of specialised clever moves. By waggling the joystick you can get him to deliver a few specialised kicks and punches. And you've got a handy arsenal of weapons such as guns, eggs and bombs at your disposal. The gameplay is promising but never gets above that of a sub-standard and dated platformer.



Graphically Kang Fu is a complete mess, as you can see from these screenshots. The green, purple and brown colour scheme is like a visual equivalent of smelling salts. If that wasn't enough to give you a raging headache then the jerky sprites and scrolling are sure to finish the job. Despite all of this I still managed to glean some fun from this rather sad little game. Maybe it's just the universal appeal of a platform game that won me over, or maybe it's my love of marsupials that is to blame.

If you're not so fascinated by kangaroos and would rather retain the sight in both your eyes, this is probably not for you. However, interested parties should contact the address above as at the moment it has no official UK supplier. By the way, it's not CD32 compatible, which is a shame.■

Mark Forbes

CD32 CD-ROM **60%**

Pinball Prelude CD

■ Price: £29.95 ■ Publisher: Effigy Software ✆ 01526 834 020

If you've read the feature on page 20 you'll know by now that Effigy are breaking new ground for Amiga games. Faced with dwindling sales and lack of retail support they've decided to release games on dual format CDs. Pinball Prelude is their maiden voyage into this new avenue of gaming. It will play on a PC CD-ROM, Amiga CD-ROM and even CD32.

So, is it any different from the original floppy version of Pinball Prelude that was released some time back? No. But that's not a disaster because Pinball Prelude is a pretty good pinball game. Effigy went to town creating three interesting tables based on the themes of past, present and future. For example, in the Prehistoric table you've got cavemen clubs as your flippers, together with all sorts of prehistoric items littered about as bonuses such as a dinosaurs, time travel clocks, bonfires and such forth. The Present table a bit more like a standard pinball table. Things like a mobile phone and a footy match feature here while the Future table is a bit more atmospheric. This is a Bladerunner type caper with light phasers as your flippers. All the usual pinball jiggery pokery such multi-ball bonuses, tunnels and the like are included along with bonuses specific to each table. I really enjoy this game. Control from they keyboard is very responsive and realistic, just as if you were playing a real table. The CD32 control pad however, was a bit tricker. I kept getting tilted off the table. The graphics are slick and the sound is enjoyable too. And if you manage to do very well I'm told there's a cash prize. I'm pleased to see this type of format emerging. I hope that more companies follow suit. ■







Lisa Collins

CD32
CD-ROM
85%

Snip tips



by Matt Broughton, Games Consultant.

Bonjour! Bonjour! Bonjour! Je voudrais la spoiling dans le games pour le Amiga, sil vil plaits. Voila! Monsieur Matt Broughton est la man pour le, er ... job.



▲ Get your level codes here for this right royal brain puzzler.

BENEFACTOR
Psygnosis

Ta to young Ben Gardner from Shropshire who has a couple of passwords to get you past those tricky-but-clever levels. Take it away, Ken Ewing and his musical mice ...

UNDERWORLD
6LRFIRMADM
H2UPQTQLMP
XTSORKRNQJ
6ERFFKPDDI
XGEICHFJDI
67TGPHPCLD
P3EEPRFFQS
P4EAOEAEO
XLUPOTZUTY

SWOS EURO '96
Sensible Software

Well all right! We haven't had any lists for a while so what say we let Richard Turner from Ramsey tell us he thinks are worth knowing ...

TOP TEN STRIKERS:
Les Ferdinand: Newcastle
Bebeto: Dep. La Coruna
Giuseppe Signori: Lazio
Stephane Chapuisat: Bor. Dortmund
Ronaldo: PSV
Ian Wright: Arsenal
Stan Collymore: Liverpool
Patrice Loko: Paris St. German
Raul Fernandez: Real Madrid
Erik Bo Anderson: Rangers

TOP TEN GOALKEEPERS:
Mark Crossley: Nottingham Forest
Ian Walker: Tottenham
Peter Schmeichel: Man Utd.
Bernard Lama: Paris St. German
Andreas Kopke: Eintr Frankfurt
Franscesco Toldo: Fiorentina
Angelo Peruzzi: Juventus
David Seaman: Arsenal
Victor Baia: FC Porto
Fransciso Buyo: Real Madrid

SLAM TILT
21st Century

Brendan White from Tubbercurry has a couple of handy codes for the attract mode (ie when the table is scrolling up and down).
SMILE: Creates a happy-smiley face on the ball (although it does get grumpy the nearer to the bottom of the table it gets!)
RADIOACTIVE: Changes the colour scheme of the table. Try it more than once on each table for different effects.



STONED: Well I don't understand this at all! Apparently (and what this has to do with throwing pebbles at people, I'll never know) this makes the ball behave very strangely indeed – almost as if it's just had its mind blown into space. Crazy. Man.
WIPEOUT: Once entered, this code'll reset the high score table.
ARCADE ACTION: This code bypasses the normal table game and heads straight into the video gaming action in the digital display panel.

SIM CITY 2000
Maxis

A cute little cheat from Terje Karlsen of Norway, that awards the player with $250 every time it's performed. Basically, when on the city view screen type in **"CASS"**. This can be done often, but if you get too greedy you'll end up with a huge firestorm on your hands that'll need putting out before more money can be taken.

GRAHAM GOOCH WORLD CLASS CRICKET
Audiogenic

A handy little tippet from Brian Lowe of Bath earns the fella a free game! To stop the other side from getting any runs whatsoever just press Esc when the other batsmen start running. You'll stop them before they get to the other end of the crease and the game will then continue from the start of the next ball without scoring any runs. Now that's just not cricket!

VALHALLA & THE FORTRESS OF EVE
Vulcan Software

Mr Brian Davies is all full of himself for finding some level codes. Take it away Mr Clever-Trousers:

LEVEL 1: No code
LEVEL 2: MAHAM
LEVEL 3: TIUIT
LEVEL 4: TOHOT

BREED '96
Public Demand

Daniel O'Brien from Essex has a handy tip for this little beauty. Basically, if you're ever short of money, ore, people or food, build a cargo ship, send it to a planet with a race you're at war with (or that you just don't like!) load up your cargo ship with whatever you fancy and then send it home. Unload it and repeat the process and, remarkably, you'll find that the race doesn't even know you're doing it! Cool. ■

MON PLOP!

Oui, that's your lot my small firm friends, but rest vaguely interested that I'll be back again next month with more fun, laughter, and fish — with a few tips and cheats thrown in for flavour (or flava if you're that bloke with the false clackers, er... you know — Peter Andre!) Anyway, don't forget to let us know what machine you've got if you wanna' get yerself a prize! Be seeing you ...

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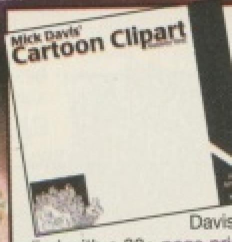
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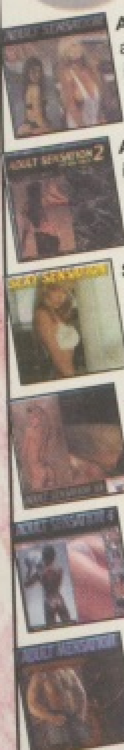
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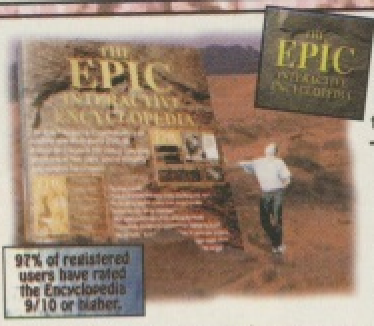
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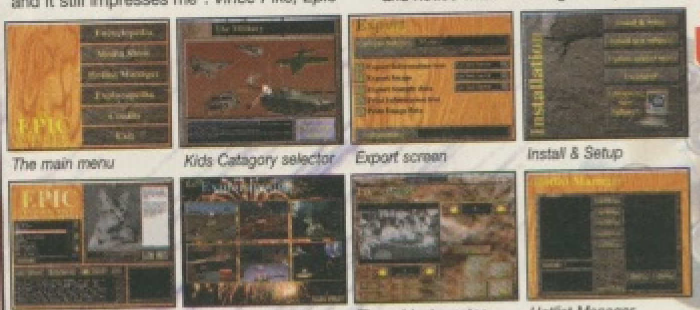
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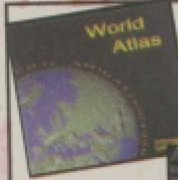
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Adventure Helpline

It's been a busy month for me, what with digging up old friends and burying new ones. Luckily, I've still had time to answer quite a few of your cries for help.

Valhalla II

Please help me? I'm stuck on Level two of this great puzzle game. What do you do with the amplifier? How do you get the fourth planet in the cosmos and what is Herman's prophecy?

B. Arnold, Newcastle.

Give Grumbleweed the cider so he can produce one of his disgusting burps then put the amplifier on the square beside him, stand on it, then drink your ale. You'll win the competition and Grumbleweed will hand over a flytrap plant.

The planets in our system (in the order in which you need to consider them) are Mercury, Earth, Venus and Saturn. You'll need the thermometer to represent Mercury, some earth for the Earth, some rings for Saturn and finally the flytrap to represent Venus. Put these on the altar and the last light will illuminate. There you must place the Book of Icarus to represent the sun and you will be rewarded with Herman's prophecy.

You'll find the rings you seek in the Cookie Monster Room. And how do you get rid of the Cookie Monster? Simply pour some poison over a cookie and feed it to the greedy pig.

Quest For Glory II

How do I capture the Air Elemental? I have managed to throw sand into its funnel but I've no idea what to do next. By the way I am playing as a thief. Please help because this is a brilliant game and I would love to see the rest of it.

Joachim Froholt, Norway.

Yes, well, it all sounds a bit uncomfortable to me, so let's just do this one quickly and move on. Get some mud from the merchant that sells plants in the fountain plaza. Throw this dirt into the centre of the whirlwind in order to keep it from moving about. Now use the bellows to subdue it. You can obtain the bellows from the room above the weapons shop. As you are a thief I suggest you go at night and use the magic rope to help you climb up there. You can also use the rope to climb above the elemental to drop the soil inside its funnel. Ouch!

Knightmare

I'm stuck on Quest two (The Cup). I've found the two gold keys and I've thrown items onto the three pads to find the secret rooms, but that is as far as I've got. I've tried to run across the hole in the floor, even with all of my clothes off, but I always fall in.

M. Blaxill, Havermill.

The mind boggles. I suppose what you do is your own business, just as long as you don't do it in my crypt and frighten the bats. This level has two kinds of strange walls and that's what may be confusing you. Are you aware that those walls with the little balls on the bottom can be pushed around? Use the right-hand mouse button on the forward arrow icon to move them. There are also some illusion walls which can be walked through, so try banging your head around a bit until you find a wall that isn't real.

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

I have managed to get into the sewers in Venice and arrived next to the Knight's tomb but there is a gate in the way and I can't open it. I think I might have to pull out a plug but it's too high and I can't reach it.

Colin Oliphant, Ayrshire.

You need to leave the sewers for a moment and go to the café in the square above. Convince the diners that the wine is lousy and they'll give you the bottle. Return to the sewers and grab the skeleton's hook. Fill the bottle with water and then use it to loosen the mud which holds the flaming torch. Use the hook in the plug and then you'll be able to pull the plug out using your whip.

Monkey Island III

I am desperate to find out the whereabouts of Largo's clothing (i.e. thread) for the making of the voodoo doll.

Amy Wise, Gwynedd.

Perhaps if you were to balance a bucket of mud over the door in Largo's cabin, things might take an interesting turn. Pay special attention to the door afterwards, for that which you seek will be hidden there.

Valhalla 3

Please help, I can't get past Aunt Maud no matter what I do.

M. Belshaw, Lowestoft.

Aunty Maud has a morbid fascination with the Black Death so you need something related to this t[...] get past her. A good start would be to pick up the two flowers and place them in the right order on the swords either side of the chest. You should get what you need then. See snip tips on page 35 for the level codes if you're really stuck.

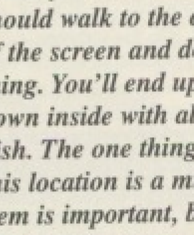
Universe

I haven't managed to get very fa[r] in this game, in fact only as far a[s] Gavric Homeworld and now I can't enter any of the doors, especially the one which is protected by lasers. I also want to know how to drive the PTV car that is in the car port.

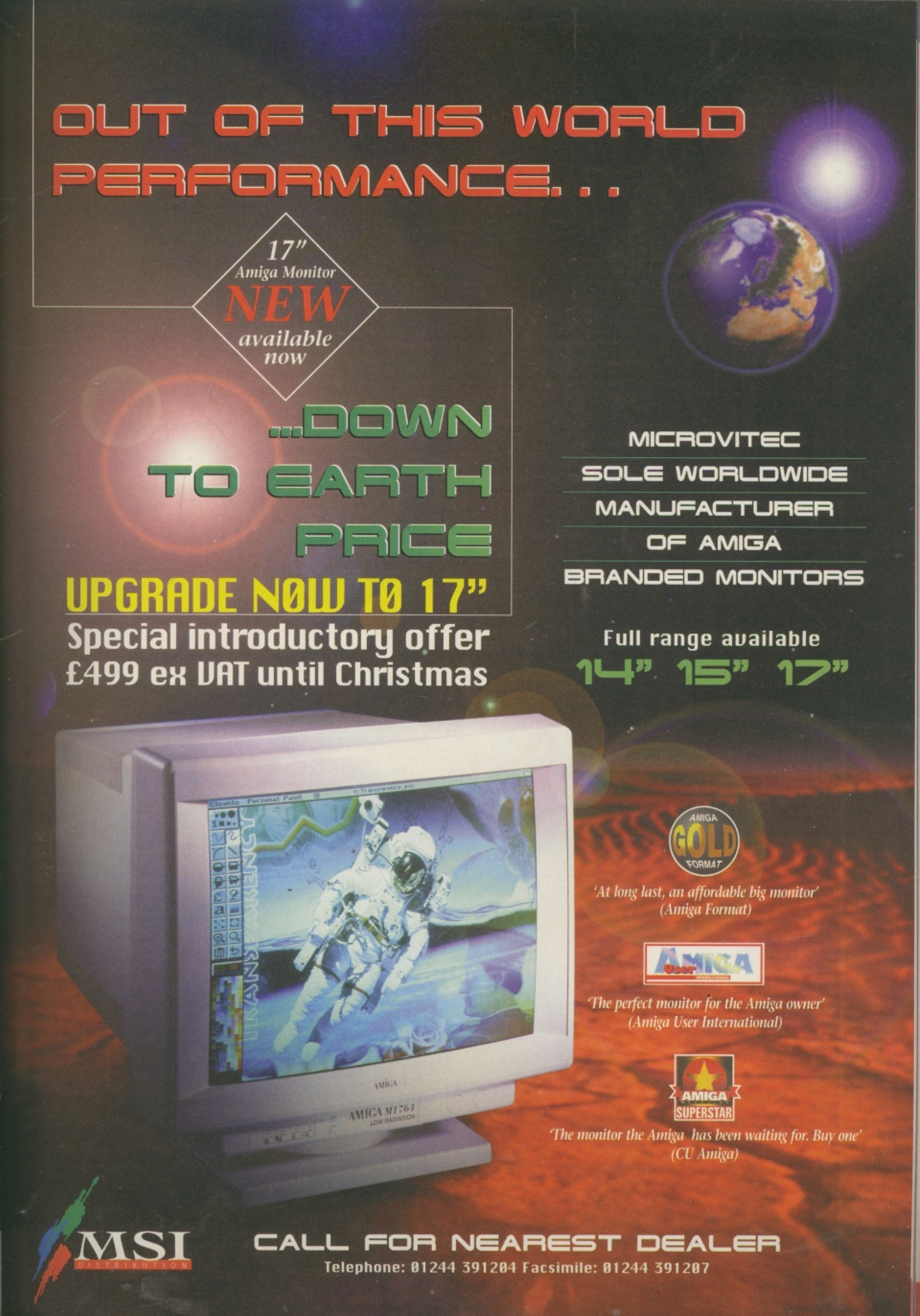
Christopher Hindley, Deeside.

When you arrive on the planet you should walk to the air ducts on the le[ft] of the screen and do the push/pull thing. You'll end up getting sucked down inside with all of the other rub[bish]. The one thing you do need from this location is a mirror. I know this item is important, but I must confess I've never seen anything of interest i[n] one of those things. Return to the do[or] which is protected by the lasers and throw the mirror at it to cause some serious damage. I will warn you that the car will refuse to take you anywhere unless you have the code which is found inside the game manual but I'm sure that won't be [a] problem, will it? ■

If you've got a little problem with your favourite Role Playing Game and would like Vamp to help you out, drop a line to: Vampyra, CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



FINAL THOUGHT: YO[U] CAN EITHER ASK THE MAN IN CHARGE, O[R] THE WOMAN WHO KNOWS!

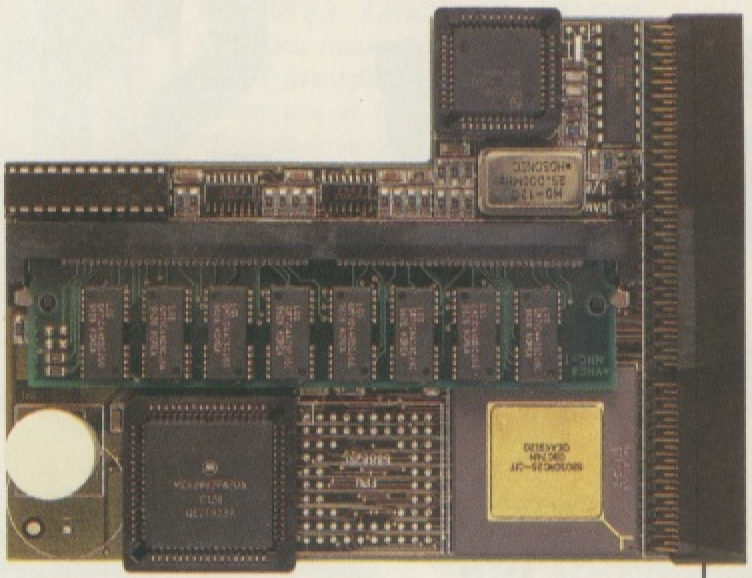


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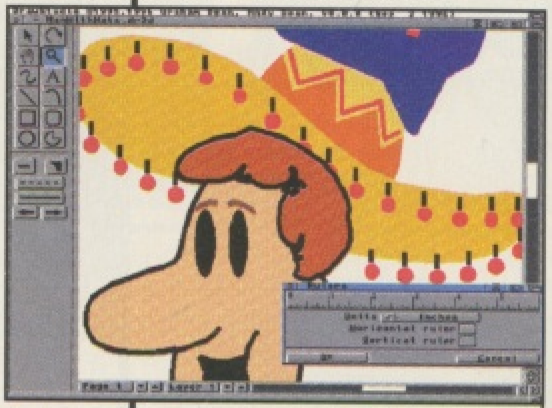
Tech Scene



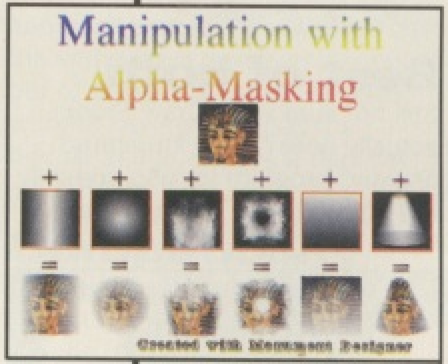
Hello, stepping into Herr Horgans shoes as Technical Editor, I've managed to keep the technical products coming in thick and fast. This month, we're well catered for, check it out.



Apollo 1230 44



Draw Studio 42



Monument Designer 49



PD Scene 54

Draw Studio

■ **Price: £59.95 (floppy edition requires hard drive) £74.95 (CD edition)**
■ **Developers: Graham & Andy Dean** ■ **Supplier: LH Publishing © 01908 370 330**

An all-new DTP illustration system appears from the authors of Image Studio and Texture Studio. But is it quick on the draw?

Desk top publishing has always been a popular use for the Amiga but recent years have seen a sharp decline in the development of quality DTP software. SoftLogik's PageStream is the sole survivor of the once healthy Amiga DTP software scene that included a bunch of excellent packages such as ProPage and ProDraw. The rest have ceased development. However, all that has just changed with the release of Draw Studio, a package that looks set to give the Amiga DTP scene a hefty kick up the backside.

The signs are good from the outset. For a start it's been developed by those Amiga stalwarts, brothers Andy and Graham Dean. If the names sound familiar it's not surprising, as they were also responsible for Texture Studio and Image Studio, two well respected applications from the recent past. While still on a graphics theme, the Deans have now moved over to the world of DTP illustration, spying a gap in the market and filling it with one of the most friendly and intuitive pieces of software to have appeared for ages.

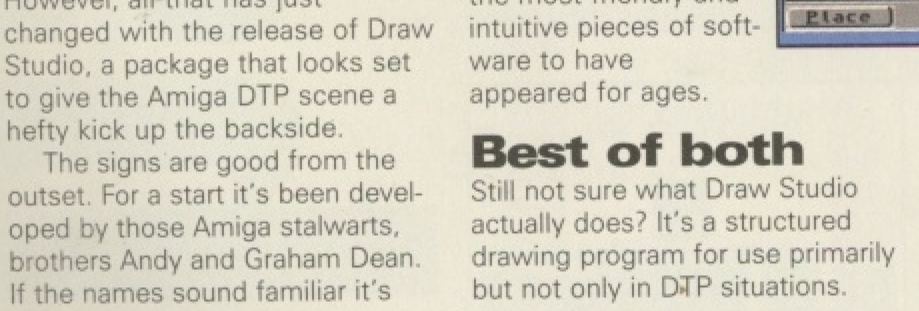


▲ The window at the bottom right is the bitmap manager, one of Draw Studio's many useful features.

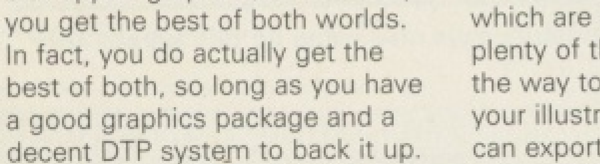
Best of both

Still not sure what Draw Studio actually does? It's a structured drawing program for use primarily but not only in DTP situations. The key to its appeal is its seamless integration of traditional structured art components with bitmapped graphics, so in theory you get the best of both worlds. In fact, you do actually get the best of both, so long as you have a good graphics package and a decent DTP system to back it up.

Basically the way it works is you import some bitmap images (IFF, TIFF, GIF, JPEG, BMP, PCX or anything else via datatypes) and combine as many of these as memory will permit with your structured elements, such as lines, circles, boxes and so on which are built from scratch using plenty of the built-in tricks along the way to spice things up. Once your illustration is finished you can export it as an EPS file or a bitmap of your specified resolution. That's simplifying it a lot because there's a whole lot more you can do along the way. Got the picture?



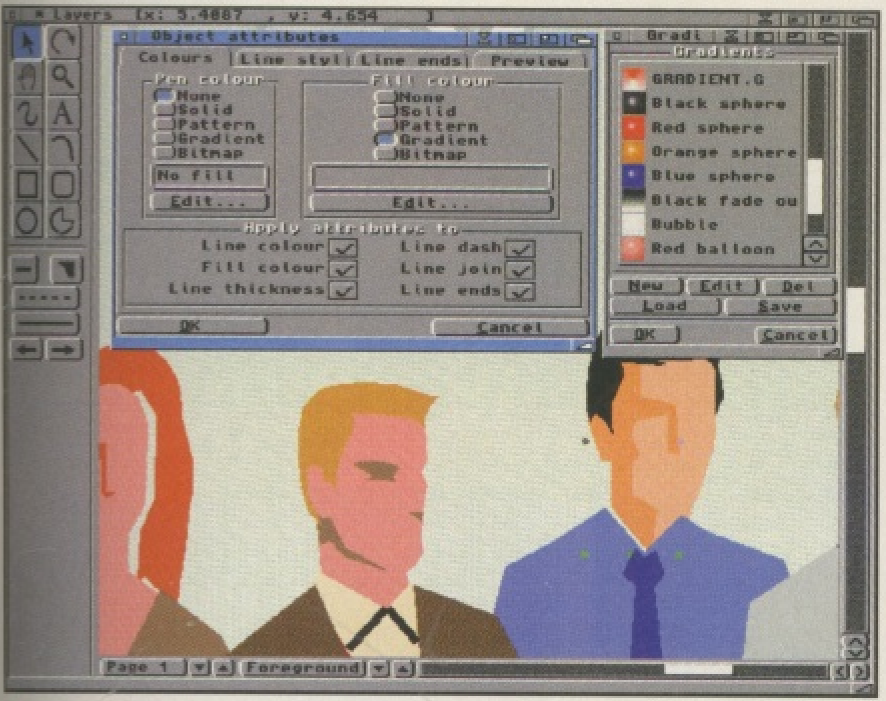
▲ As the 'man with hats' demonstration project illustrates, Draw Studio is well suited to cartoon images. More artistic users could find Draw Studio a perfect tool for creating a store of original clip art.



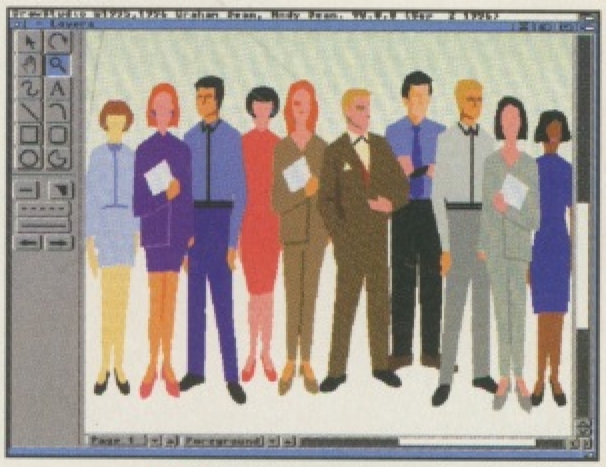
▲ Cool effects like shadows and tints are simple to create and there's a broad selection of built-in graduated fill types.

DTP

Draw Studio's main purpose is to produce illustrations for use in DTP applications, whether that means amateur club newsletters or material for professional magazines and publications, but as it outputs its final images as 24-bit bitmaps it can be used for all kinds of graphic



▲ To beauty of structured art is that it can be expanded indefinitely without ever breaking up into jagged pixels. This is close up view of the image below.



▲ There's no reason why you can't work with structered elements only, which can be very effective.

work. In theory the output resolution can be as big as you like, although at the moment this is limited to available RAM. Actually there seems to be some other limiting factor, perhaps Chip RAM. There really needs to be an option to render a project straight to a file on hard drive. That would allow you to output a non-jaggie image at whatever size was required, which could then be used as large as you like, even if that meant importing it to a DTP system on a different platform (say, providing a massive front cover image or illustration for use in Quark XPress on the Mac). That's not possible at the moment but it looks as if it will be addressed in the next update of the program.

Bearing that in mind, at the moment it's limited to smaller illustrations, but it can still knock out some very slick images. Alongside the standard structured art tools there are options for producing a variety of graduated tints, plenty of built-in arrowheads for lines and diagrams, Bezier curves, freehand drawing, dotted lines and more. Transparent colours can also be used. This is very welcome and has a number of uses apart from purely as an artistic effect.

Bitmaps

Bitmaps come into the plot via an effective bitmap management section. You can select and import any bitmap into Draw Studio's bitmap manager, where it can be given a name tag that's different to its original filename. When you want to use a bitmap, for example to fill another object or text, you go to the bitmap manager and select it using the lister which displays all the currently loaded images as thumbnails along with their tag names. This approach makes it possible to use the same source bitmap in a number of areas in a variety of ways, without having to reload the bitmap image or have it duplicated in RAM.

Compatibility

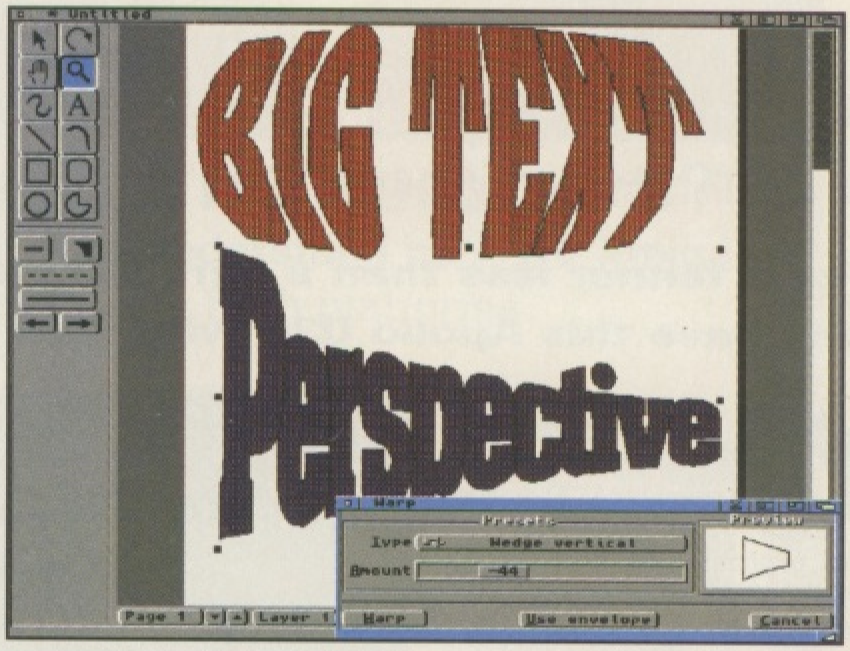
Draw Studio isn't yet the total DTP graphics package but it's moving in the right direction. Many will feel compatibility with other platforms and systems is an important quality in such a program, and thanks to its support of importing and exporting EPS, IFF, TIFF, PCX, GIF, JPEG and BMP file types it won't have any trouble interfacing with PC and Mac systems, should that be necessary. However, the limitations on the size of the final output is something that definitely needs to be sorted out, and I'm lead to believe that it will be very soon.

For anyone working on less demanding projects, especially those working purely with Amiga systems, Draw Studio will provide a whole new creative avenue when it comes to illustration. No longer are we limited to dated, unstable software with no user support. While its use of MUI may not find favour with everyone, this has the side effect of making it a very flexible program that offers plenty of power and options from a simple interface, with all the usual MUI features including 'balloon help' and loads of configurable preferences. This is a particularly important consideration with a creative tool such as this, where the interface needs to be as transparent as possible, allowing the user to realise complex ideas with minutes. As it stands, Draw Studio is an excellent program, which for a version 1 release is quite an achievement.■

Tony Horgan

Warp factor nine

One the more fun tools to play around with is the warper. After grouping together a number of elements of structured art or text (it doesn't work with bitmaps) you can choose one of the preset warps from the menu and alter the amount of stretch and squash from a slider. You get a small outline preview too which is nice. Alternatively you can mould your own warp using the Envelope option. This is especially useful for spicing up text and adding a sense of movement.



Super friendly

While there have been some good structured art packages released in the past, like ProDraw for example, they're hardly ideal for getting the most from a nice big fast AGA or 24 bit-equipped modern Amiga. Draw Studio is a totally new application and has been written with today's requirements and hardware in mind. The result is a program that's incredibly easy to use, with plenty of options for you to adjust everything to your specific needs.

One of its most endearing features is the layout of the controls and menus backed up by standard DTP hotkeys. Anyone who's used a DTP package will feel instantly at home with Draw Studio, importing and exporting, drawing shapes, moving and resizing objects with ease.

DRAW STUDIO

A500 · A500+ · A600 · A1200 · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements: OS 2 or higher, hard drive, 2Mb RAM

ease of use....................90%
No troubles here. One of the friendliest programs you'll ever use.

performance....................88%
Covers all the basics and adds plenty of new tricks.

value for money..............85%
It's not that cheap but you do get a very nice manual for your money.

OVERALL
A refreshingly powerful DTP graphics tool. **89%**

Apollo 1230

■ Price: 0Mb £99, 4Mb £129, 8Mb £149 ■ Developer: Apollo

■ Supplier: Visage ✆ 0115 944 4500

For a tenner less than a bare Blizzard 030 you can have this Apollo 030 with 8Mb of RAM.



Accelerators are pretty much standard equipment on A1200s these days. We need not harp on the fact that the stock 14Mhz 68020 is not up to much when compared to modern software. As with other platforms, the specification required to run the average application has risen and risen. So accelerators are always welcome in my book.

There's a key difference between extra memory and CPU power. Memory such as RAM dictates what specification the software needs to work at all whereas CPU power only affects the speed the software will run. To that effect memory is more important but presuming you have enough to do what is required, you don't want to be left waiting around for it to happen. It used to be that RAM cards were a lot cheaper than accelerators until the Apollo 1230's predecessor, the 1220 arrived. Like the RAM cards available then it also cost only £99 but it significantly sped up the A1200 given an onboard 1Mb or 4MB SIMM.

CPU power

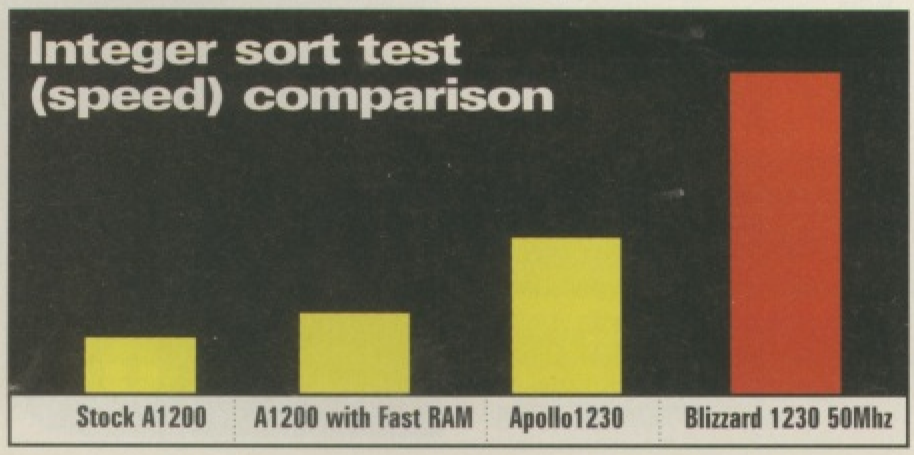
This new version, the A1230, is unsuprisingly fitted with a 68030 instead of a 68020 and comes equipped with an MMU making virtual memory a possibility. The 1230 also very usefully accepts either a 4 or 8Mb SIMM but unfortunately 8Mb is PCMCIA unfriendly so you can forget any PCMCIA activity if such a SIMM is fitted. This stems from the fact that the 1230 is really a souped up 1220 which was never designed with the logic required to map the memory above the PCMCIA space.

MMU and FPU

Performance wise, the1230 is virtually identical to the 1220 card since the 68030 isn't much of an advance on the 68020. The only main difference is the addition of a tiny data cache and the MMU of course. However, this benefit is negated by the 1230 being clocked at 25Mhz instead of the 1220's 28Mhz. I'm told this was due to public sensitivity to 'overclocking'. Surely no-one cares about 3Mhz? The fitted 68882 is a 20Mhz unit which is clocked at 25Mhz anyway!

The Apollo 1230 is a competently built card even if PCMCIA is of no use. And with 8Mb of RAM it's £10 cheaper than an unpopulated Blizzard 1230MK IV. Memory, speed and a real time clock all for a ton and a half is a pretty good deal. A good card for the price, shame about the PCMCIA but it's a worthy consideration if the wal[let] can't quite stretch to a Blizzard. ■

Mat Bettinson



Apollo 1230

A500 · A500+ · A600 · **A1200** · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements: An Amiga 1200 with a free trapdoor slot.

ease of use........................85
Plug 'n' go but requires jumper to set memory capacity.

performance........................82
Good acceleration. It's a good and very nippy card.

value for money....................88
Can't argue about the price, it's £10 cheaper than an unpopulated Blizzard.

OVERALL
A worthy enhancement to an A1200. **85**

Siamese

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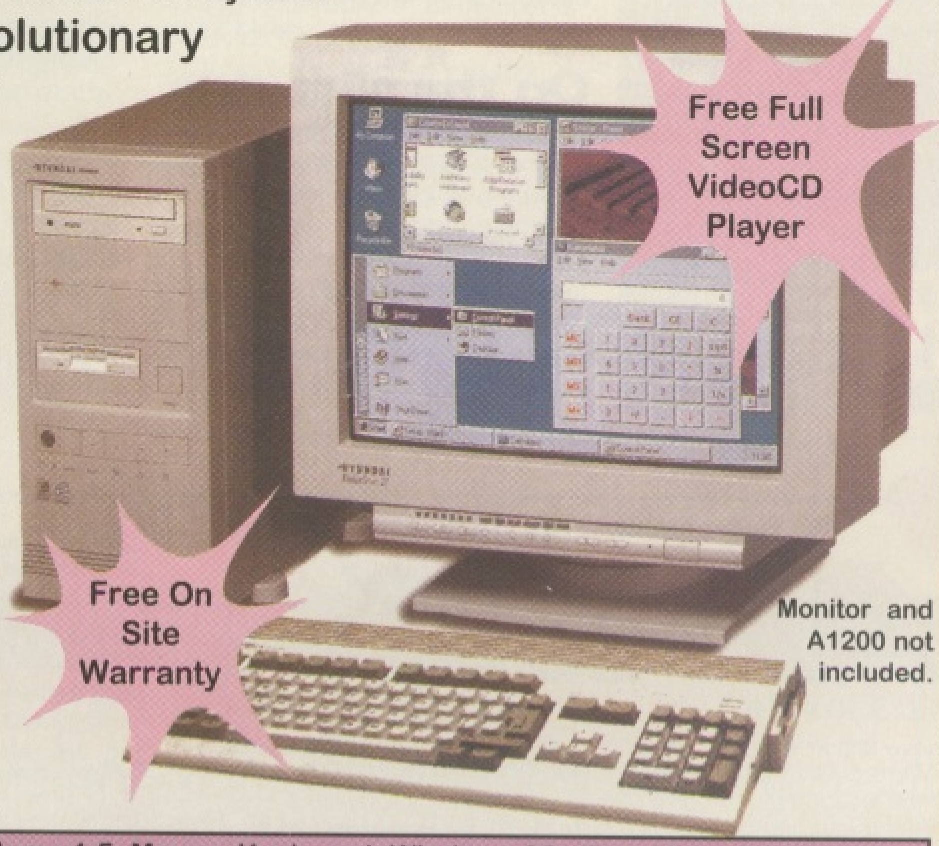
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Siamese System Pack available Seperately from Blittersoft Ltd £ 149.95

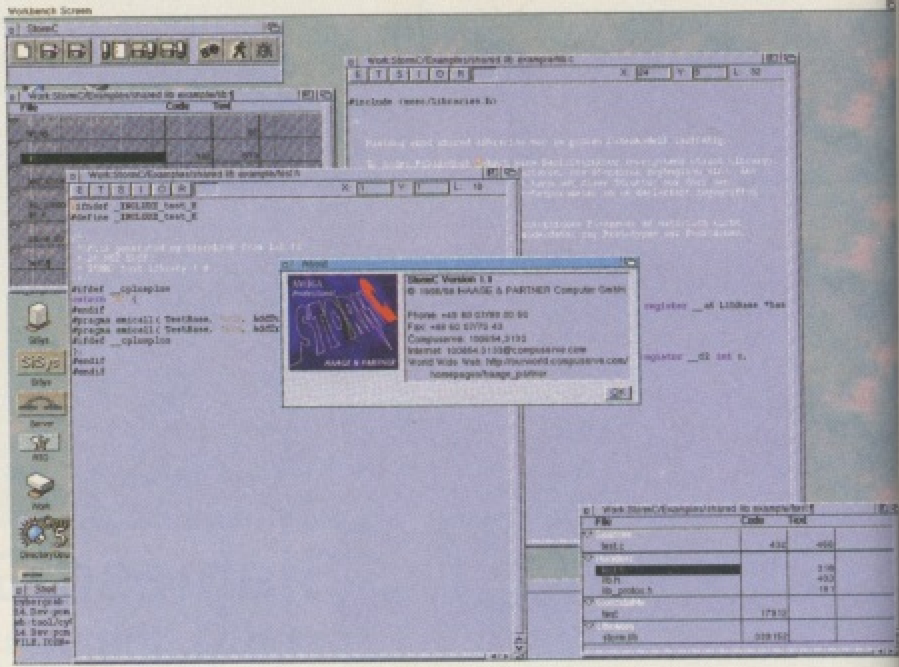
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Try our internet page www.hiq.co.uk - email steve@hiqltd.demon.co.uk

Storm C



■ **Price: £269.95** ■ **Developer: Haage Partners**
■ **Supplier: Blittersoft ✆ 01908 261 477**

Murphy's law. Along comes something that you've been waiting for forever and it's what you've always wanted but ...

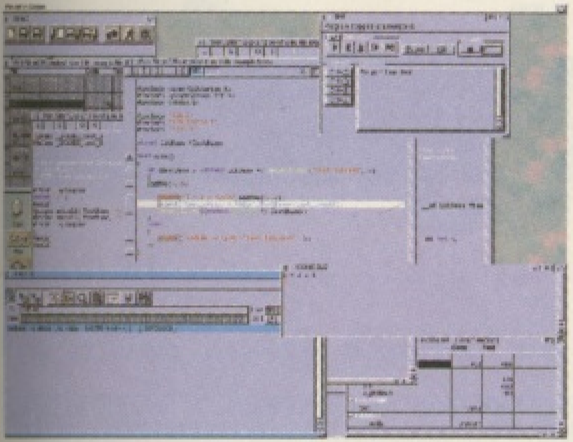
I was really looking forward to reviewing Storm C. I'd just added a C++ Classes to the PC Side of the Siamese System and was looking forward to being able to do the same on the Amiga side. What I really needed was a powerful integrated editor and debugger to use on the Amiga and it looked as if Storm C was going to be the answer. SAS's C++ has never really been too useable as it's pretty slow and doesn't have any support for things like exceptions or templates. So, I had more than a passing interest as to how the Amiga's only remaining commercial C++ compiler would fare.

On the slim side

The small poorly-written manual that accompanies Storm C didn't make a great first impression. Compared to the two huge tomes and massive AmigaGuide files that come with SAS C, it shapes up extremely poorly. This is a big oversight. As a programmer, I understand that its more fun to write code than documentation, but it's impossible to program without documentation! Luckily, though there is online help to get you started.

Aside from the manual however, there are some excellent new features. For example, Storm C has a Visual Project Manager which organises your projects and saves lots of time by removing the need for makefiles. This enables you to easily add and remove files from projects and all components are neatly displayed in an overview window. From here you can open source files just by double clicking on their name which is far more advanced than SAS C. A toolbar is also provided with commonly used features such as load/save, compile/debug.

The Storm Editor where all the source files are opened up has keyword highlighting, which if tastefully setup (my default system colours are headache-inducingly loud), can make editing code much



less eye straining. Real time updating as you type is another handy feature here as it shows up common errors such as typos or misspelled function names as you go along. After the novelty wears off though, you start to wonder where the other power features such as multiple views are. Fortunately it's possible to use any third party text editor to make up for the shortfall.

Debugger drag

A good debugger is essential. I've never found SAS's Code- Probe to be that friendly so as I was having a hard time debugging my AmigaDOS packet handler, I thought this would be a good thing to try Storm C out with. A few frustrated hours later, I decided it wasn't that good an idea after all. Several things about Storm C such as library pragmas, and library function prototypes are subtly different to SAS C. These differences should really be explained in the manual and it really needs a chapter on how to successfully port SAS code to StormC. StormC repeatedly refused to compile my program a second time, always complaining that "An error in the ARexx protocol accrued. The program cannot be compiled. Try restarting the system".

I rang up Storm C tech support for help. They weren't in, so I Emailed them a few times. A month later, no reply. Ho hum. I tried compiling one of the few example programs, the C= ColorWheel example and it worked first time so I suppose it just didn't like my code.

Limited libraries

One of Storm C's most notable features is how it lets you define your own library structure base, it's brilliantly easy. You define your structure, then use a #pragma statement to tell the compiler that its your library base. This is a very useful thing to be able to do, for example you can give other programs access to your structure in the same way as C= libraries such as the intuition. library do, ie struct MyBase *MyBase=(struct MyBase *)OpenLibrary ("my.library",1); To do the same thing in SAS C you have to provide your own library startup code, which makes using many SAS/ANSI C functions unusable.

Now for the bad news; you can't step into your own library functions using the debugger (cue sounds of heads thudding against walls). This alone makes Storm C unusable for nearly all of my projects. Libraries are a very important program component, to be unable to debug them properly is a massive oversight. Another missed opportunity is the inability to create C++ libraries, unlike SAS C++. StormC also does not provide library startup code for muiltibase libraries, only single base.

Falls down

What Storm C does, it does well. The things it doesn't do, I can't wait for. If development is continued, Storm C can only overtake SAS C. Once my various gripes are sorted out, I would like to switch to StormC. Future developments include StormC for ProDAD's P-OS, and support for Phase5's PowerUP PPC project. In a recent press release, fat binary and integrated cross compiler development environment is outlined, that should allow quick and easy development of mixed 68k/PPC software. So, I can only wait in anticipation. ■

Paul Nolan

Storm C

A500 A500+ A600 A1200 A1500 A2000 A3000 A4000

system requirements:
requires workbench 2.0 and above, needs 3Mb RAM and hard drive.

ease of use....................85%
Quite easy to get in to, once you've overlooked the lack of the manual.

performance..................80%
The code output could be more efficient and user friendly.

value for money.............75%
At this price a more complete package should be expected.

OVERALL
Innovative Amiga C++ compiler but still needs more work.
80%

Monument Designer 2

■ Price: DM 399 (approx £179) ■ Developer: ProDAD International
■ Supplier: ProDAD International © 00 49 2206 82728

A new video titling program steps into the ring. Will new ideas be enough to make it a winner?

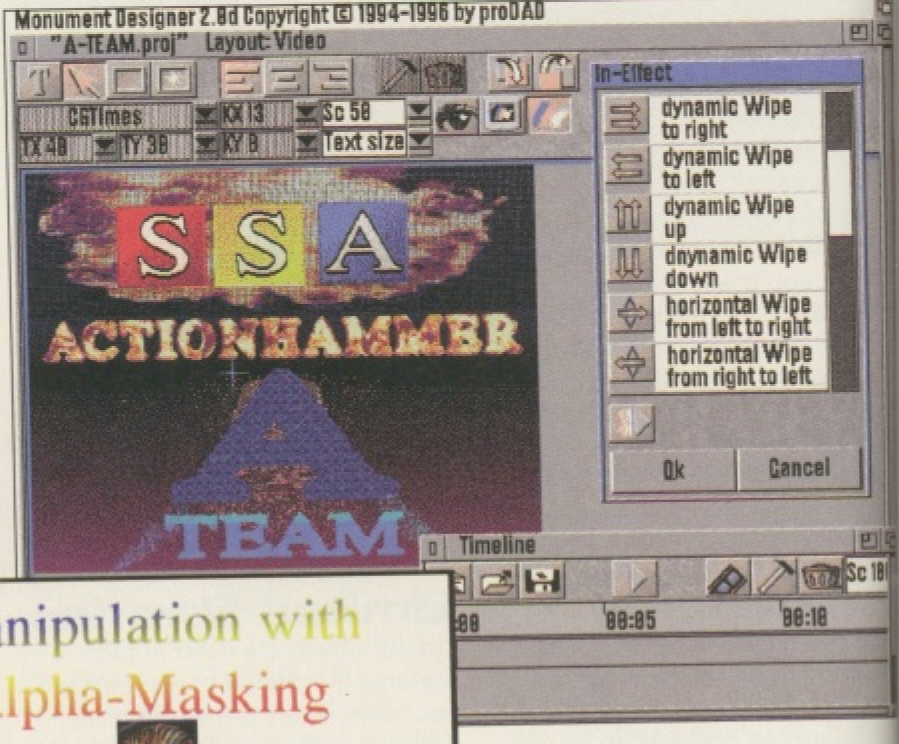
Let's face it, when it comes to video titling software, the Amiga is more than well catered for. There's the likes of Scala, VideoStage Pro and MediaPoint offering professional results in exchange for very little effort, Adorage doing a good job of churning out special effects and a range of shareware titlers backing them up. So what more can a new player in the field offer us? Quite a bit actually.

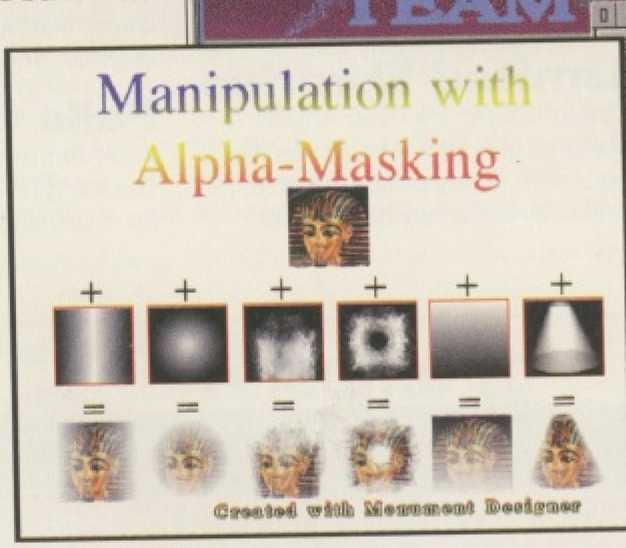
New approach

There wouldn't be much point in trying to emulate the likes of Scala, so Monument Designer takes a rather different approach. It uses a multi-window interface which can be directed to any available screen mode. This houses a preview window, a timeline, an effects selection window and a main layout window. This last one looks more like something from a DTP package than a video titler, which is a reflection of the way the program works.

Titles, credits, presentations and such forth are created by combining text and picture elements into a sequence. However, for the text you are limited to using Compugraphic fonts. Bitmap fonts are not supported. This is unfortunate, as many videographers will have amassed quite a collection of bitmap fonts for all occasions. Surely it wouldn't have been a problem to incorporate support for these?

Text is entered into a box which can then be manipulated as in a DTP system using grab handles, while the text itself can be formatted using justification and centring tools. Text can be rotated but they've messed up a bit here. You have to rotate each letter separately, so if you want a line of sloping text, you need to adjust each letter in turn and then position them by hand so that they all line up properly. I can think of better ways to pass the time.





Alpha channels

If the thought of using Compugraphic fonts for your titles brings to mind visions of dull black and white screens, don't worry because there are of ways of sprucing up your text. Words can be filled with bitmaps or gradient fills. You can even use animated alpha masks to give them some movement.

For example, if you had an animation of rippling concentric circles, this could be used as a mask to displace the main display. There's also a range of alpha channel effects included which work in a similar way, offering effects such as fog, stars and flames. Compiling a complete sequence is fairly simple. The combination of the timeline and wipe windows makes it easy to set up keyframes and render an animation.

Conclusion

While it's good to see new ideas and approaches being taken with software, ultimately Monument Designer is not overly impressive. It does offer some neat ideas and if you're used to working with DTP you may well prefer its interface to that of Scala and company. However, it lacks the 'quick and dirty' features of many of its rivals, so if you want to bang up some title sequences in a few seconds you might find this is rather unwieldy. However, the fact that it outputs to animation files makes it suitable for more than just video applications – you could put it to use for creating intros and presentations to complement a variety of Amiga based applications. ■

Steven Seybold

A fresh approach

For the presentation of video effects and titling software you need to display two screens: one for all the control panels and another for a constant display of the screens and titles you are building up. Most video software uses a split-screen method, so the controls are packed onto a small strip at the bottom of the screen, leaving most of the main screen visible behind it. This has the advantage of allowing you to view your graphics as they will appear, while your control panel can be toggled on and off.

However, the trouble with this is that it's not very flexible and doesn't take into account anyone who wants to use their own screen modes or graphics cards. Both Monument Designer and Animage address this problem by using a system of resizable windows, one of which contains a preview of the display you're currently building. Old guard fans, however, might not like this as the preview display is an approximation of what will actually be displayed in the final presentation. It's up to you.

Monument Designer 2

A500 · A500+ · A600 · A1200 · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements: Workbench 2 or higher, 2Mb Chip RAM, 4Mb Fast RAM, 68020 or faster processor, hard drive.

ease of use 85%
Good, though some might find the lack of a true WYSIWYG interface a hindrance.

performance 75%
Definitely one for the power users out there.

value for money 75%
If you can live without the SSA playback then a 24-bit paint program would provide better value.

OVERALL
Useful video tool but has some shortfalls. **76**

Animage

■ Price: DM 235 (approx £105) ■ Developer: ProDAD ■ Supplier: ProDAD ✆ See box out

From the same stable as Monument Designer comes a new video effects package.

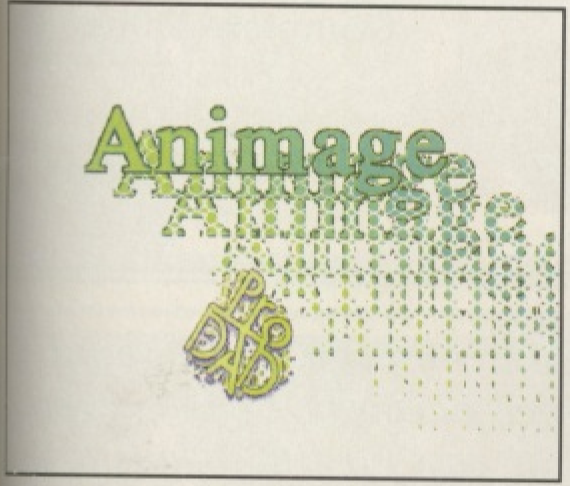
Astute readers will have already noticed similarities between Animage and ProDAD's previous animation effects program Adorage. With Animage, ProDAD have started over again, dropping the functional but dated interface of Adorage and totally re-thinking the whole thing. However, it would be unfair to link Animage too closely with Adorage, as it's a far superior system capable of knocking out some extremely slick and professional looking results.

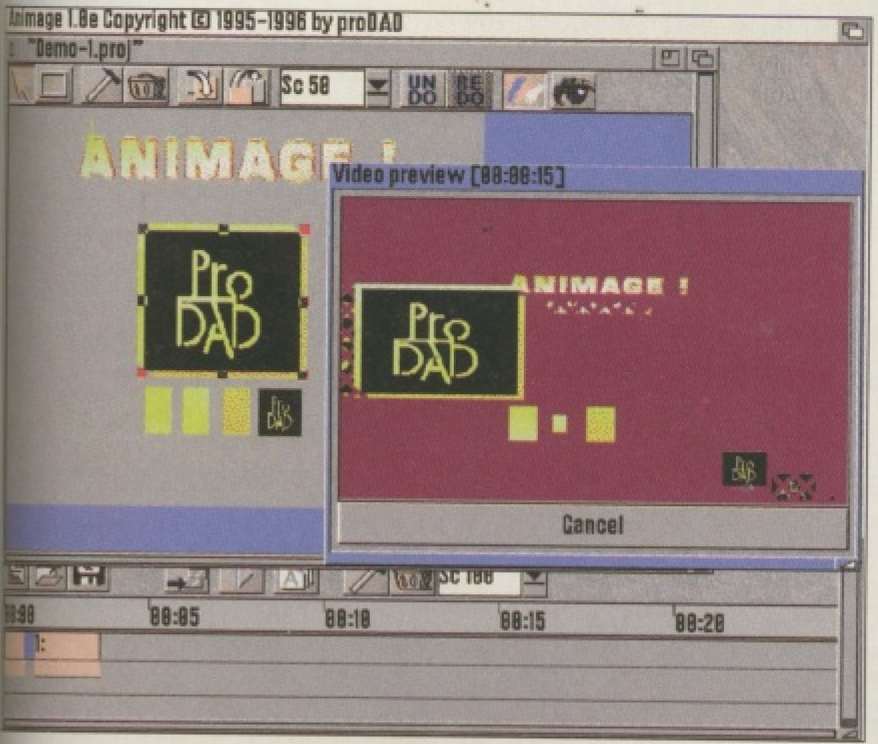
Watching the output from Animage you could easily be convinced that you were watching a video effects machine. It's basically an animation composition tool but it allows you to combine and process a number of animations in some pretty dynamic styles. The working environment is very much like that of Monument Titler, so instead of a customised screen of buttons as in Adorage, you get a nice system compliant window-based front end that can be used on flicker-free high resolution displays including graphics cards via Cybergraphics.

Mix and match

What makes Animage so special is the way in which you can combine your animations. For a start, you are free to completely resize and scale each of your component animations, so we're not just talking about merging or crossfading from one anim to another. Each part can also be given its own flight path, speed and special effects. So this means you can emulate those tumbling, exploding live video effects that are so popular on TV. Even though you're not actually processing live video signals, there's no reason why you can't use digitised video animations.

Because the final output of Animage is an animation, you can even import and process animations that you have previously created with the program. The ability to add fading trails to your components gives even more scope for super-slick cuts and fades.





Very slick

Although Animage is far from a complete video effects and titling package it does have some very clever tricks up its sleeve.

There are many things you can do with Animage that would be either impossible or at the very least extremely time consuming to replicate with other software. If you're serious about flashy video titles and presentations then this should definitely be on your shopping list, as it will give you a substantial lead over any competition you might have.

Once you've got a series of Animage projects down onto videotape you could have yourself a very impressive showreel that would otherwise require a rack of dedicated video effects units to achieve. For this reason alone it's well worth looking out for. ■

Steven Seybold

SSA animation

Animage and Monument Designer both output Anim5 animations as used by most Amiga animation packages, plus a special custom format called SSA.

Anyone who has used ClariSSA or Adorage will be familiar with ProDAD's inventive and highly effective SSA animation format. It stands for Super Smooth Animation and increases the maximum frame rate your Amiga can push out when playing animations, with higher frame rates leading to smoother movement.

SSA exploits the Amiga's interlace mode which flickers between two displays 25 times every second (or 30 times in NTSC mode). An interlaced picture actually is made up of two parts (fields) which are 'interlaced' between each other in alternating lines.

Each frame of an SSA animation holds two fields, which in this case are two consecutive animation frames. With a big helping hand from the video hardware that controls the flickering of the interlace mode, these animations quite often live up to their Super Smooth monicker.

Where to get it

Animage and Monument Designer are both available from ProDAD in Germany. At the moment there is no official UK supplier for either program. For now you can order it direct from ProDAD International, Im Auel 14, D-51491 Overath, Germany, Tel: 00 49 2206 82728. Watch out for news of a UK distributor.

ANIMAGE

A500 | A500+ | A600 | A1200 | A1500 | A2000 | A3000 | A4000

system requirements: Workbench 2 or higher, 1Mb Chip RAM, 4Mb Fast RAM, 68020 or faster processor, hard drive.

ease of use 85%
A few more tutorials would be helpful to get the most from it. That preview window is very handy.

performance 80%
A very powerful tool for anyone that uses animation.

value for money 85%
Should find a place on any animator's hard drive.

OVERALL
Making strides in the world of video effects. **83%**

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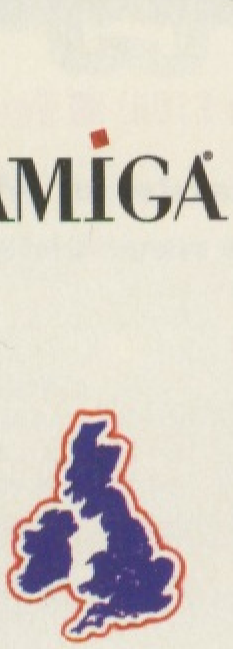
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AMIGA

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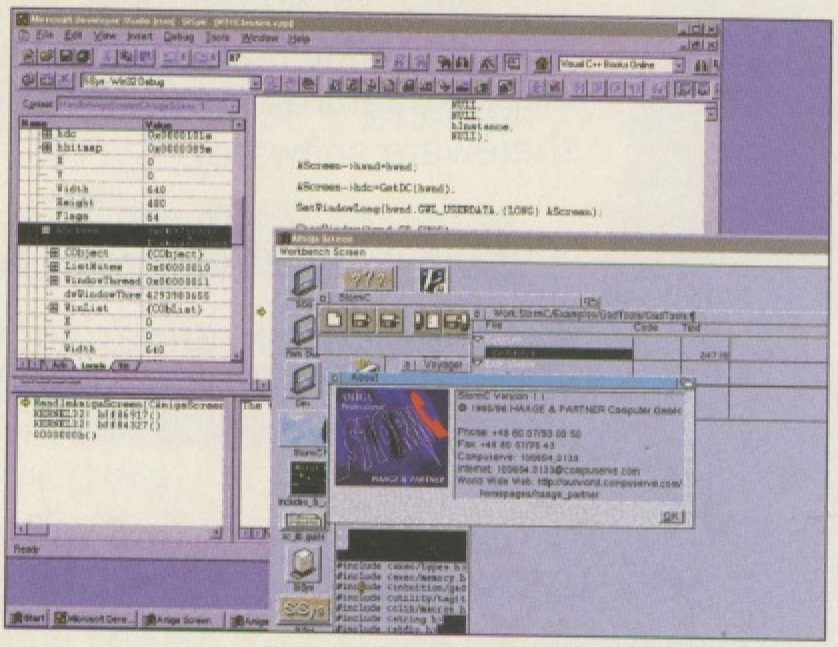
Siamese RTG

■ DFR: November ■ Developer and supplier: HiQ
✆ 01525 211 327 Email: steve@hiqltd.demon.co.uk

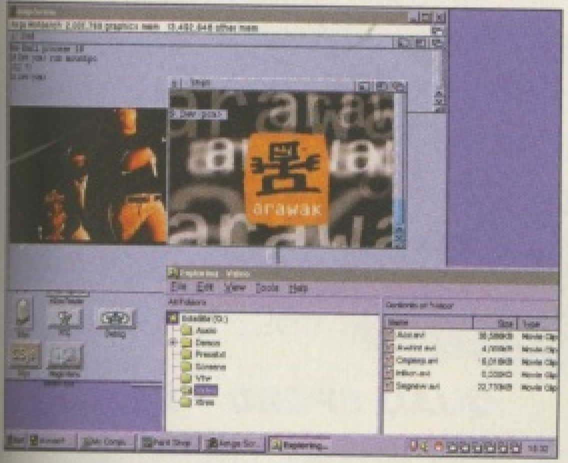
Unlike the film industry, this sequel looks like it's going to be even better the box office smash original.

The original Siamese Amiga to PC network package achieved a top rated award and was dubbed: "Most revolutionary product of the year" at the time. However, the lads from HiQ haven't sat back on their laurels since the original Siamese system rolled off the production line. They managed to pull a new version of the Siamese out of their hat that has impressed us to the extent that we had to do a special preview of the product before it's finished.

So why are we so impressed? In a word – RTG. Not the normal kind of RTG in which the Amiga's screen is ReTarGetted to a third-party graphics board, normally only possible on Zorro slot Amigas. No, not that kind but one where the Amiga's display is miraculously teleported across to a PC. We kid you not.



▲ Siamese RTG produced unbelievable results for the Amiga when we benchtested this preview version.



Display card superior

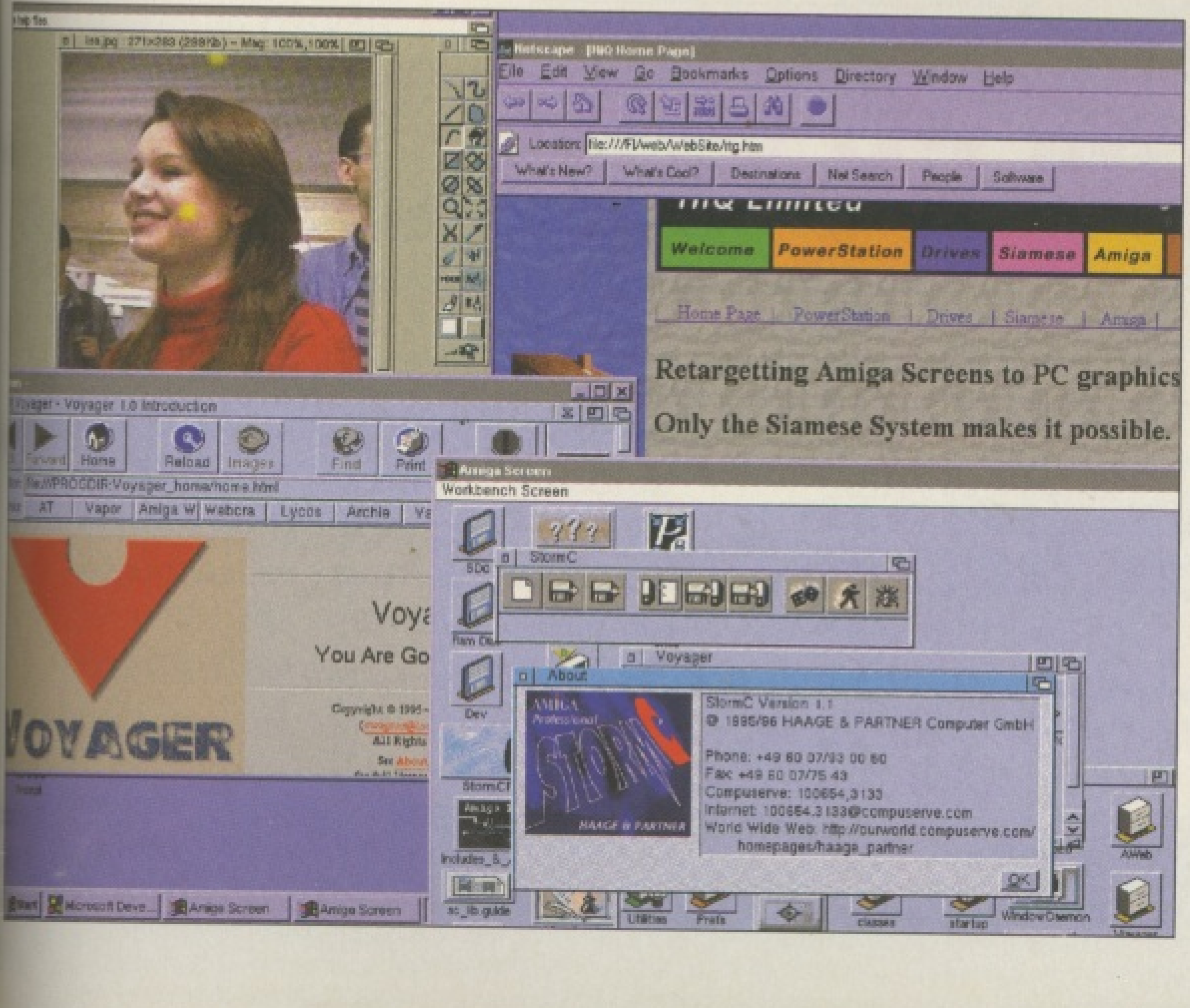
"Why have they added this capability?", you ask? Reasons are many and varied. Firstly, any old PC usually has a display card sadly superior to the Amiga's custom chip set in terms of speed and resolution if not graphical tricks. Next up, a nice cheap (and large) SVGA monitor can handle both the PC's output and the Amiga output in one. As with the Siamese original, there's only need for one keyboard and mouse, the A1200 could be slung under the table.

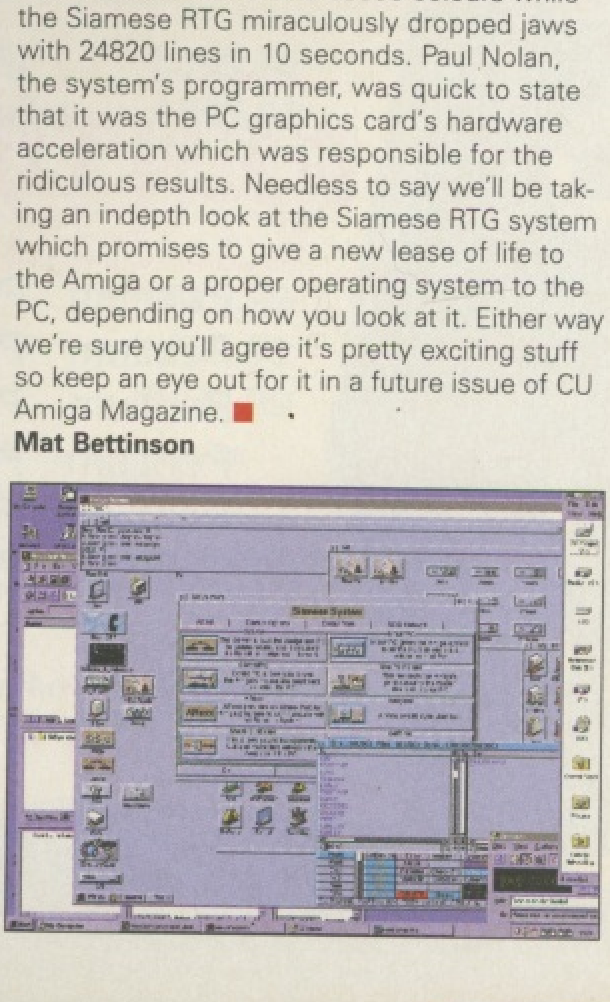
We don't mean to suggest you'd relegate the Amiga to a simple bolt-on for the PC – far from it, running Amiga applications on separate screens appears as windows on Windows 95's desktop. All of the top Amiga applications will carry on multitasking but with graphical output many times faster than normal. Next to a native Windows applications it'll be instantly apparent which system is superior.

Shocking example

For example, we ran a moire pattern benchmark on native AGA, a CyberVision 64 in an A4000 and the Siamese RTG system. The pattern pulled off only 440 lines in 10 seconds on AGA in 256 colours, 10832 on the CyberVision 64 at twice the resolution and 65536 colours while the Siamese RTG miraculously dropped jaws with 24820 lines in 10 seconds. Paul Nolan, the system's programmer, was quick to state that it was the PC graphics card's hardware acceleration which was responsible for the ridiculous results. Needless to say we'll be taking an indepth look at the Siamese RTG system which promises to give a new lease of life to the Amiga or a proper operating system to the PC, depending on how you look at it. Either way we're sure you'll agree it's pretty exciting stuff so keep an eye out for it in a future issue of CU Amiga Magazine. ■

Mat Bettinson





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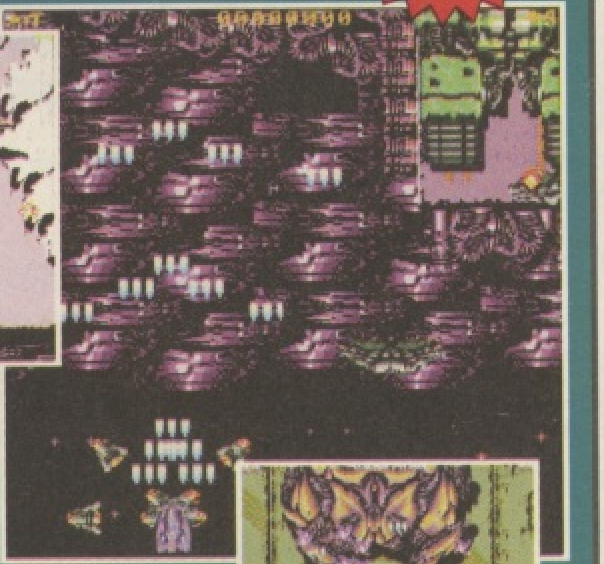
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PD Scene

Check out the latest games and demos from the PD scene, rounded up and put through their paces for you this month by Anthony Brice.

Demo of the Month

MegaTyphoon
game


Stunned. That's the first word that comes into my head after giving this game the once over. And I'll bet good money that you will be too. This has got to be the most technically accomplished shoot 'em up for years. What's most impressive is the amount of sprites flying around the screen at such a super-smooth rate. You may have even seen the PD game Blaster a couple of years back – it was the quickest thing the Amiga had ever coped with. This one beats that and lots of the commercial zappers hands down. It really is that frantic. The sprite designs aren't as good as some of the commercial offerings such as the wonderful XP8 and Project-X, but hardcore action is what it comes down to, and Mega Typhoon delivers that in abundance. It's a taster of the full game so you'll need to order it from the authors directly, but I doubt it will be too long before some smart company picks it up for a full commercial release, so get in fast. It's even got funky music on the title screen, and some trainer options for the those not accustomed to shoot em ups. Very highly recommended.

AminetPath: game/demo/megatyphoon.lha (253k)
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

91 %

Step Five
game

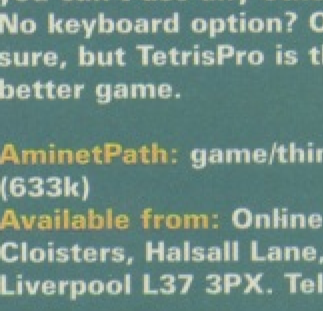


I can almost hear the moans now. Another Tetris game. Why bother? Because many people consider it the best game ever written. It all comes down to the fact that the simple ideas are often the best. Look at Breakout as an example. Any game that is as popular as Tetris is always going to be cloned, and Step Five is just that. Reasonable presentation, nice music and it plays well enough. I've always liked Tetris, so it's easy to speak highly of clones, but I would pick up on a few flaws with this new version, namely the long delays between games, the controls being too sensitive, and that you can't use any other control apart from the joystick. No keyboard option? On Tetris? Blasphemy! Worth a look, sure, but TetrisPro is three years older, and definitely the better game.

AminetPath: game/think/StepFive.lha (633k)
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

89 %

Steel Worlds
slideshow

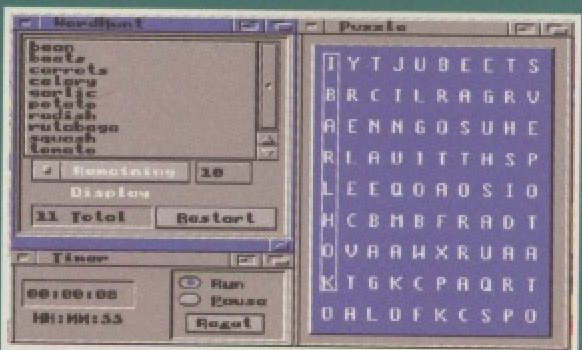


I haven't seen a decent slideshow in quite a while, so this was a pleasant surprise. The theme of this one from an Italian group of scene coders called Vajrayana is big characters with guns, similar to those from Bitmap Brothers' Chaos Engine, as featured on our covers last month. They're all reasonably well drawn but it's the presentation which is really notable. The background music suits the atmosphere perfectly along with smooth fades between each picture, and a nice rotating disk symbol to smooth out pauses between each image. However, it needs to be a touch more stable. Running it from anything other than early startup caused it to crash and invalidate my hard drive. Best to pop it into RAM first.

AminetPath: demo/slide/vrn-StWorld1.lha vrn-StWorld2.lha (990k)
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

83 %

Word Hunt
word puzzle



Remember the puzzle books you used to buy and work with on a coach when travelling to see relatives? Word Search was pretty much guaranteed to be one of them. This is just such a program, which gives you a list of words to hunt for in a huge matrix of letters, testing your pattern matching skills as they can be hidden in any direction

It's another simple idea which gets a new lease of life, if word puzzles every really died that is. This Amiga incarnation will let you generate your own puzzles, play with a timer to give you added challenge, as well as defining what size of grid you play in, setting a smaller font for bigger displays and you can also create puzzles and print them out for use with the old pen and paper at a later date.

The GUI is a little fiddly for my liking but it's no real problem, and you have plenty of options for configuration. Highly recommended if you like this kind of thing, as they say.

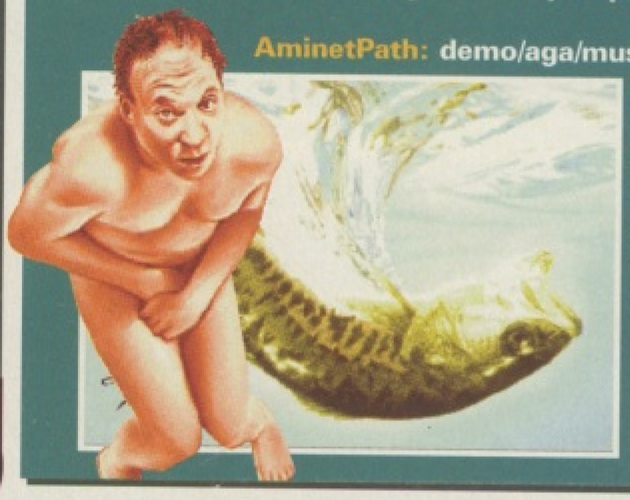
AminetPath: game/think/WordHunt.lha (83k)
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

77 %

Muscles
demo



Muscles opens with a top-down view of a rotating door and surreal objects running amok including a hammer, TV set and an air-plane. It then goes on to include chrome rendering, rotating objects and a nice credit roll with a 3D picture of 'Muscles' dropping in from the front of the screen. It's a big demo, though, and pauses between effects are noticeable. To see it in all its glory you'll need something like an expanded A1200 at least. The music grates a bit but the demo is saved by a superb picture of a dolphin breaking the ocean followed by the end sequence where the music also significantly improves.



AminetPath: demo/aga/muscles.lha (3856k)
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

88 %

Atome
demo

This starts off reasonably enough with a superb hand-drawn picture of a menacing-looking wolf. However, after that it fades into this horrible 3D world accompanied by a cheesy piece of music that chugs along until the end of the demo. Things improve later with impressive rotating objects that rank as some of the biggest I've seen moving around on an Amiga. We then get another of these horrible 3D worlds (horrible of you don't like 3D worlds of course) before dropping into a still of a chrome mask with spotlight effects running across. This made the demo for me. It looks superb. I'd run it again just to see this. Some morphing 3D objects wrap up, along with some excellent artwork. Finally it's onto the scrolling credits of the end sequence where, fortunately, the music significantly improves. Worth seeing just for the chrome mask.





AminetPath: demo/aga/SP96-Atome.lha (496k)
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

76 %

Wally the Worm
game



Wally the worm is a nicely presented update of the ageing classic game in which you steer your worm around the screen attempting to avoid dangerous objects while picking up the bonus items littering the area. Your worm increases in size as you progress, making it harder to move around without crashing into yourself and losing the round. That is basically it and Wally makes no real changes to this tried and tested format, apart from graphically souping it up and improving the presentation side. Speaking of the presentation, that's where this game really shines. From the film-style intro to the introduction screens between each level. It's not bad for an Amos game. There are three levels to play: Voodoo, Techno and chains, with the latter being the toughest as you need to move diagonally. It plays nice and smooth as well, although three levels don't offer much in the longevity department. The graphics are very small which makes it hard to spot the bonus items. This makes the game a bit harder to play, but it's hardly the best method of increasing the difficulty level. Still, it's a nice enough game, if a little flawed.

AminetPath: game/misc/Wtw_1.lha Wtw_2.lha (899k)
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

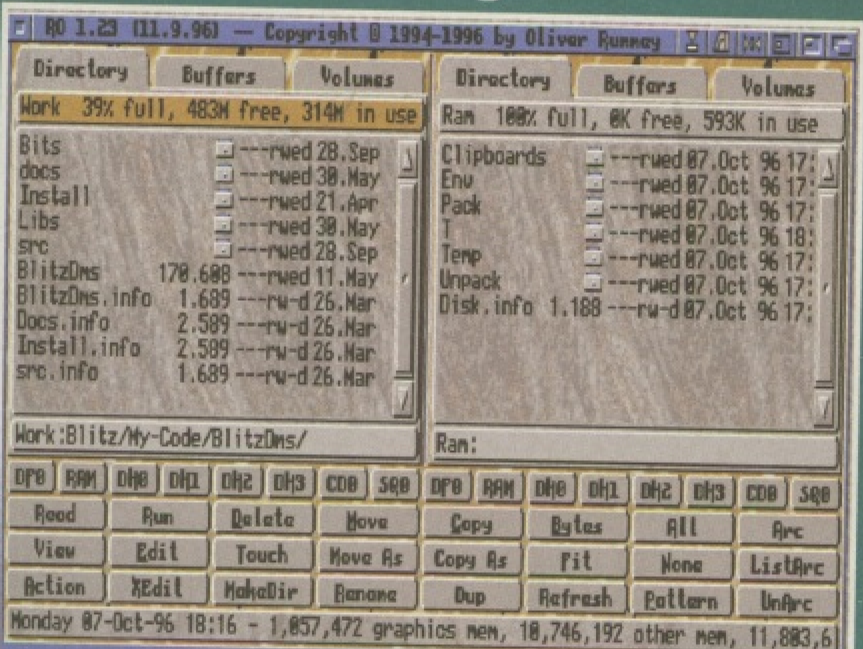
83 %

PD Utilities

public domain

It's a sad day for utility fans as we see the last ever Vark compilation. Don't worry though, Anthony Brice has managed to sniff out other top notch utilities for you to try to make up for the loss. Who knows – maybe we can even persuade Vark to stay?

RO.lha
MUI based file manager



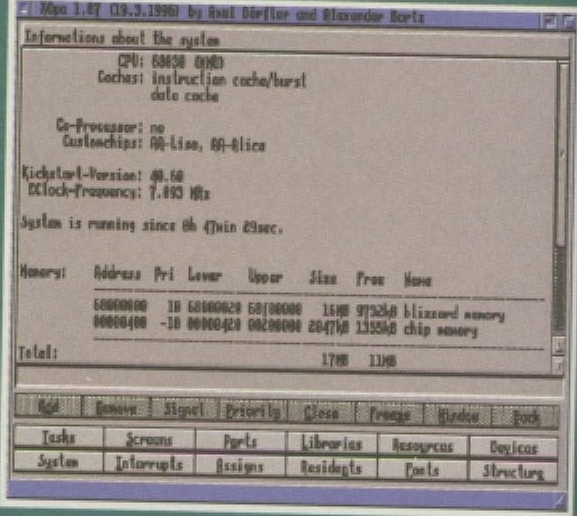
Yet another Directory-Opus clone, I thought when I first saw RO. Don't get me wrong, there isn't much wrong with plagiarism providing you improve on the original work and Directory Opus was never original in the first place. Either way, this is one kind of program that everyone needs, or else keeping things tidy becomes practically impossible. RO does much the same as all of the rest, but is well worth a look for several reasons, the first being that it's actually pretty good. Everything is laid out in a logical way and it has a very tasty preferences program that offers a lot of configurability. A lot of people use tools like this as a direct replacement for Workbench and with the features that RO offers, you could do it with this too. Another good reason to get RO is that, while it doesn't offer the incredible range of options that Directory Opus has, it is a lot cheaper being shareware rather than commercial. Give it a whirl and it may well become your first choice for general file management tasks.

AminetPath: util/dir 343k
Available from: Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

84 %

Vark15.lha
Vark utility disk number 15

Utility of the Month



I never cease to be amazed every time I come across one of Vark's compilation disks. Just where does he find all this stuff? Not content with putting together a one-disk compilation this time, Vark has excelled himself and put Vark15 onto two disks or one file if you pick it up from Aminet. These compilation disks are always worth picking up as there's always several tools you find there that are useful no matter where your Amiga interests lie.

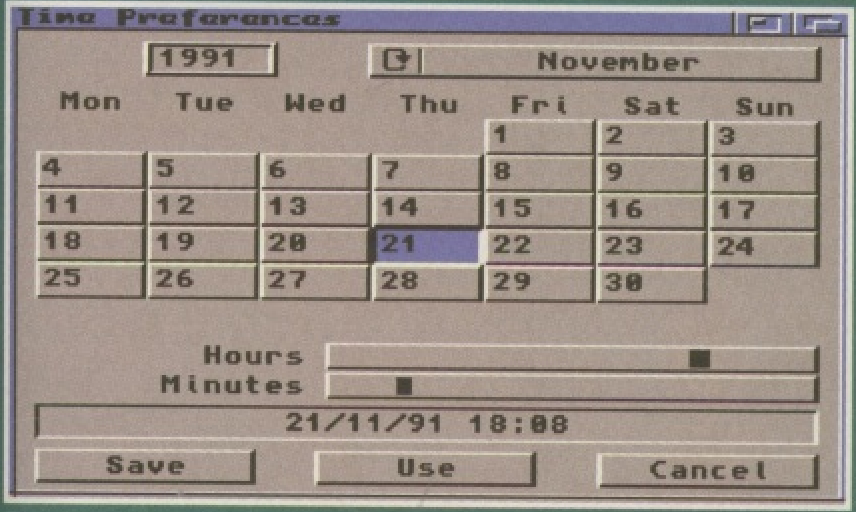
Unfortunately, Vark is leaving the Amiga so I suggest that fans of the series Email him directly at vark@enterprise.net to see if we can try to change his mind.

Amongst the gems on offer this time we have CleanDisk for removing deleted files from hard drives, DundeeDir which is an extended Dir command with extra features, DiskFull for using every bit of a floppy disk when copying files, a new Iprefs replacement, a new Env: handling device to save memory, Kick2File for creating a file of your ROM image (which Blizzard accelerator owners will love as they can use these to up and downgrade their machines) and my favourite Xopa, which is a system monitor similar to Asp that lets you remove dead tasks and close inactive windows (a lifeline if you're a programmer). As usual this a superb compilation. Vark will be sorely missed.

AminetPath: util/wb (1410000k)
Available from: Online PD.
1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

93 %

DateInspector
Clock monitoring utility

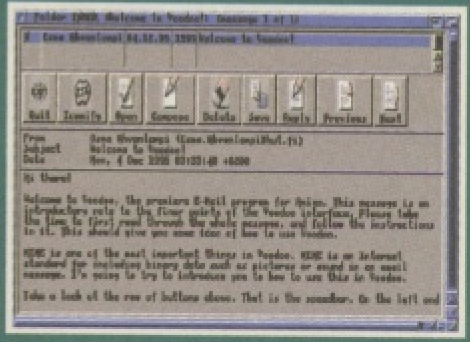


One of the major oversights in most of the Amiga models has always been the lack of a built in clock. A lot of software uses the current system time and date for processing data. Some backup tools use the file datestamp to update their files so you have problems if the date gets set in the future and no copy is made. Fortunately there are clocks we can use in our Amigas that we take for granted until they break down. This tool can save a lot of problems should your machine suffer a bad crash that messes up the clock. You may not notice it but DateInspector will. Drop it into your WBStartup drawer and it sits there performing some intelligent checks on boot up to see if the date has changed drastically since last boot, and warning you with a requester, as well as the option to launch the preferences program directly, if the time is wrong. I won't do without it now, even though it is such a tiny program and it's saved me from problems many times already due to bad crashes.

AminetPath: util/boot 3k
Available from: Online PD. 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

82 %

Voodoo
Multi-threaded graphic Email reader for OS3.0+

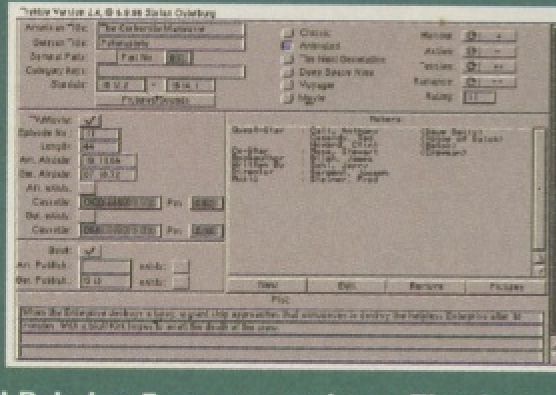


If the Porsche is the best looking car in the world but still comes down to being just a car, then Voodoo is the equivalent of the Porsche of Email readers on the Amiga. Originally intended to be part of AT's surfer pack, the Voodoo looks great once you get past the friendly installation process. Voodoo is different to YAM (Yet another mailer) in that it has no inbuilt programs for delivering and receiving Email, relying on external utilities (some of which are supplied and installed for you) to be set up to use SMTP or POP formats. This is handy if you're a Demon customer, for example, and have to pay extra charges for POP mail, and use SMTP instead. It also has support for MIME (Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions) and UUEncoding, as well as using PGP, if installed, for encrypting and other security features. Multiple folders can be defined for mailing lists, and configuring an external editor is easy with the excellent Arexx port. It uses the ClassAct GUI system which MUI-haters will appreciate too. Voodoo is shareware compared to YAM (which you can register for free) so it comes down to personal preference and cost.

AminetPath: comm/mail (614k)
Available from: Online PD. 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

89 %

Trekkie
GUI database for Star Trek info



No prizes for guessing what we have here is a database on everything Star Trek, and not yet another animation of Enterprise travelling at warp speed. We're not talking just Star Trek here either. Voyager, Next Generation and Babylon 5 are covered too. The database files are available as a separate archive presumably to make updates easier and are editable so maintaining the files isn't difficult for the staticians amongst us. There are the usual view and search functions for navigation too. I will take this opportunity to moan about the horrible font that the program insists on and that you need a super-hires screen to view the whole window. For dedicated fans only.

AminetPath: biz/dbase (78k)
Available from: Online PD. 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335

74 %

IconInstaller
GUI for converting icon graphics

Now this is really smart, Amigas should come with a program like this in the first place. Although we have a wonderful GUI system, with a nifty icon and window environment, there is no easy method of changing icon images to your preference.

We have Icon Edit since Workbench 2.0 and better PD equivalents (like Iconian) but until IconInstaller there was no painless way of replacing icons without manual editing. The Icon types would need to be changed to project, tool, trashcan, disk or drawer and the tooltype definitions would need to be replaced by hand.

IconInstaller comes to the rescue with a beautiful GUI that you can drop source and destination icons onto and it converts the images, leaving other data such as tooltypes fully intact. It even has options to support NewIcons (written by the same author) and batch operations on whole directories. IconInstaller comes in the NewIcons archive, as well as Aminet separately.

AminetPath: CUCD 5 (96k) Available from: Online PD. 1 The Cloisters, Halsall Lane, Formby, Liverpool L37 3PX. Tel: 01704 834335



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...FRACTAL GENERATOR fractal in 256 colour.
...WORKBENCH HACK many hack/toy/blanker ect
...NEW SUPER KILLER know kmow & kill over316 type of ...virus for all A1200 owner
...MINDWARP very first demo for the A1200
...KLONDIKE DELUXE AGA (3D) the best A1200 cardgames ...famous lady as cards face 18 + only
...SLEEPLESS NIGHT 3
...PLANET GROOVE Truly A1200 Demos
...MOTOR INVADER 2 (2D) Brillant INVADER game
...POINT OF SCALE Great A1200 only demos
...CHROMAS- Fairly good demo.
...WORLD OF MANGA (4DISK) magnificent Japanesecomic ...include Japanes Chick ect recommend
...MAGIC WORKBENCH Improve the look of your WB& add ...to your WB really BRILLIANT
...WB 3 UTILITIES load of Wb 3 only utilities
...U-CHESS the best chess program games sofar but require ...Brillant graphic
...WORKBENCH 3 SCREEN Great back drop
...ADULT SLIDE Vol 1-9 (2 disk each) *see below
...BODY SHOP VOL 1-7 (2 disk each) *see below
...FITCHICK vol 1-3(2disk each) *see belowto order any disk ...state disk code &volume no? (remember 2 disk per vol-...)

DEGRADER

...A1200 FIX DISK COLLECTION 1
...A1200 FIX DISK 2 COLLECTION 2
...RELOCKIT V1.4a latest. run A500 SOFTWARE
...A1200 FIX DISK VOL 3 (new july 95)
...above are design to make any old A500-A600 ...programe/games ect to run on your A1200/A4000 ...FOR ALL AGA AMIGA OWNER. RECOMMEND

...A1200 UTIL - AGA TESTER, SYSINFO ect
...ACTION REPLAY V4 Complete ACTION REPLAY.
...MADFIGHTER 2 brillant street fighter clone
...AGA BLITZ SCREEN BLANKER
...FAST GIFF 2 display GIFF pic In Workbench.
...AGA DIAGNOSTIC - NEW system tester
...BLACK BOARD AGA decent Image processor
...QUICK GRAB AGA -grab AGA screen PICTUREAGA110
...BEYONDS 1 (3) stunning 256 COLOUR fantasy art. ...userbreathless
...SMELL LIKE CHANEL NO5 brillant demoray trace picture ...on the A1200
...MAGIC FACTORY 1 STAR TREK (5 disk)
...AGA UTIL v1&2 (2) AGA util compilation
...AGA UTIL V3 &4 (2) more of above
...MULTBOOT- 4 various version A500 EMU
...OFFICIAL WORKBENCH 3 HARDDRIVE INSTALLER
...WB3 HARDDISK PREF & INSTALLER installing
...CROSS DOS PLUS v5.1 read/write PC files
...SUPER LEAGUE 3 -latest manager games
...SPEAK & SPELL - educational software for kid
...BIG TOPS (18 + only)HMMmm
...KELOG LAND -brillant platform games
...ACTION REPLAY V5 - NEW UP DATE TO V4
...GIGER TRIZ very playable 256 colour tetriz
...FATAL-BLOW new STREET-FIGHTER 2 clone
...CINDY CRAWFORD Vol1 (2 disk) latest release
...INFESTATION (3 disk) The ultimated AGA demo
...CINDY CRAWFORD Vol II (2disk) amazing
...VIDEO TRACKER AGA-ultimate demo maker
...MAGIC WB EXTRA vol 1 & 2 (2disk)
...GIF BEAUTIES Vol (11-18) 8 more girls disk
...FRIDAY AT 8 another brillant AGA demos
...ASSASIN MULTIVISION AGA pic viewing util
...ALIEN FRENZE 2 player blasting +power up
...BIG TIME SENSUAL (2disk) SPACE BALL 2
...MASQUERADE 2disk brillant puzzle games.
...RAM JAM 94 it cat be done (2disk)
...EXPLOIT 2 DEMO new effect welldone.
...COMPLEX ORIGIN 2disk require 2 diskdrive
...TREASURE OF TUTANKHAMUN- eductaion tool
...LOVE 2 disk-simply brillant DEMOS
...AGA UTIL 7 & 8 (2 disk) .More USEFUL util

AGA234 KNOTTY-Stunning AGA sliding pictre puzzles
AGA240 LOTTERY WINNER hope fully will improveyour chance of winning a jack pot..GOOD-LUCK
AGA241-258 AGA GAME-GALORE AGA 01-18 lot of games
AGA251 PACKMAN AGA -the best pacman yet
AGA252 ROCKET PD - Super thrust clonebrillant graphic for 1 or 2 player
AGA253 REAL DEMO stunning special effect
AGA254 DIRT AGA Brillant 256 colour effect.
AGA255 DELIGHT EXPLORE excllent demo
AGA256 KEFEREN AGA Demo lot of effect
AGA257 MINOMIST RAVE great rave music.
AGA258 OXYGENE Fantastic demo
AGA259 INTEL-OUT another very good demo
AGA260 SOMEJUSTIC94 Demo of the monthbrillant whirl effect. RECOMMEND
AGA262 TO THE DEATH very good STREET-FIGHTER clone with very good graphic.
AGA263 GEORGE GALAXO (2disk) brillantmultilevel shoot/platform game. RECOMMEDN
AGA265 MISSILE OVER ZENON (2disk) Brillant3D missile commander with fantastic graphic
AGA266 TEAM-HOI DINO PLATFORM excellent dinoplatform Note:this disk was a commercial games
AGA274 MUSIC 2 SURVIVE 2disk 8 excellentmusic master piece. well worth getting
AGA271 RAVE MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE II (2disk)
AGA278 CHANNEL Z ISSUE 1 (AGA) (2disk)
AGA base disk magazines. RECOMMENDAGA disk magazine topic.demo/music
AGA285 WORKBENCH BACKDROP VOL 3
AGA295 DE-LUXE MONOPOLY- Board game.V addicted
AGA296 DONKEY KONG Arcade classic conversion
AGA297 BOMB PAC Extreamly good to play
AGA298 ROCKET 2 set deep underground brillantgraphic. even better with 2 player
AGA299 SCRABBLE-Now fully run on all Amiga
AGA300 MAGIC WB V2. Demo of version 2
AGA302 TUTANKHAM II(2) Education-Egyptian MUMMY
AGA303 PAMLA.ANDERSON.(2) 18+ only BayWatch Babe
AGA304 BODYSHOP V8 (3) more bikini beauties
AGA305 TIMEZONE (2) V.Good graphic adventures.
AGA307 DENTAWOLF dooms demo
AGA308 NAXIS -Really show what AGA graphic co do
AGA310 FEARS (2d)- dooms clone demo
AGA312 JINX (2d) Fantastic arcade puzzle
AGA313 RAM JAM THE TASTE DEMO.very wicket demo.
AGA315 ILEX MYSTIC. New AGA demos
AGA320 KLONDIKE 3 (4disk) Hd require & 2meg+we aslo have a list of 25 cards for above.
AGA321 HOT-BABE 1 (2) MUST BE OVER
AGA322 HOT-BABE 2 (2) 18
AGA323 HOT-BABE 3 (2) BEFORE
AGA324 HOT-BABE 4 (2) ORDER ANY
AGA325 HOT-BABE 5 (2) OF THE HOT-BABE PACK
Hundred of quality Magic wb icon & back drop
AGA388 DESK-TOP MAGIC- 32 animated screen blanker
AGA389 WAR OF THE WORLDS -full 3D games
AGA390 FEAR 2. Brillant 3D graphic games like
AGA391 PSSST Amiga version of Spectrum games
AGA392 CHILD MURDER(4)Horror graphic adventure
AGA390 FEAR II -Brillant 3D game play just likeDOOM on the PC Garenteed you impress.
AGA393 PC EMULATOR V3- Latest PC emulator
AGA400 HYPER RACE (2) Super racing games
AGA410 CINDY CLAWFORD (3) new
AGA411 ELLE MACPHERSON (3)
AGA412 CLAUDIA SCHIFFER (3)
AGA413 BIG GIRLS II (3)
AGA414 GIRLS GIRLS (2)
AGA415 NIKY TAYLOR (2)
AGA417 KYLIE MINOUGE (3)
AGA418 FEMALE BODY BUILDER (3)
AGA419 EXCELLENT CARD GAMES 3 latest
AGA420 POKER & BLACK JACK DELUXE (3)4MEG
AGA421 COLOUR WB make your WB more colourful
AGA422 RIDGE RACER Demo on the Amiga.
AGA423 DRUG STORE DEMOS (2disk)
AGA424 DREAM WALKER (2) Demos
AGA425 MYSTIC DEMOS(2) 95 excellent demos
AGA426 ORIGIN 2 (2 DISK), Amazing

SEE PAGE 1 FOR MORE SOFTWARE FOR YOUR AMIGA

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G941 PHANTOM - excellent shoot games (DEFENDER 96)
G942 MOMENTA-LAND - Brilliant game similar to ZOOL (not A1200)
G943 JOUST III - Brilliant C64 games with update Amiga graphic
G944 DELUXE GALAGA V2.6 - Ther Very Latest Galaga. Hi Recommend
G955 LAZER RACE - Good Tron type extremely addicted to play
G956 TRAIN-DRIVER SIMULATION - The most realistic train sim
G957 MASTER-BLASTER - Kill various monsters with bombs
G958 KNOCK-OUT - Mini destruction derby, very addictive
G959 DUNGEON HERO - 3D Graphic adventure similar to DOOM
G960 MORTAL KUMQUAT 3 - Weird but fun beat-em-up
G961 CODE NAME NANO - Superb Thrust clone (NANO FLY 2)
G962 MICRO MARKET V3 - Get rich by buying shares. Great games
G963 POKER-MANIA - if you like poker then this is for you
G965 LETHAL FORMULA - Adventure similar to Monkey Island
E253 BEGINNER TYPING TUTOR
E254 WORD PUZZLE PRO - Create Crossword puzzle or solve puzzle
E255 KID DISK 7 - Another very fine education program
E256 EARLY LEARNER (age 3-5) teach your kids how to read
E257 A-Z COUNTRY OF THE WORLD
E258 UK COUNTIES - Similar to above but this is based entirely on ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND & NORTHERN ISLAND
E259 BASIC ELECTRONIC V1.5 (2 disk) for Electronic fan
E261 MASSIVE GUIDE TO THE INTERNET V2.3
AGA429 POWERDROID-96 - New Asteroid with brilliant graphics
U1010 WB2 INSTALLER - install A500/A600 workbench to HD
U1011 TURBO-CAT PRO V1.2 (not WB 1.3) create catalogues
U1012 TEXT-ENGINE V5 (not WB 1.3) The very latest word processor with spell checker. This is the full version highly recommend
U1013 DIARY-2000 - use just like the real diary
U1014 TOTAL EXLIPS - Disk Magazine 1
U1015 NEW CHEAT DISK V2.1 (2 disk) include some games Fix
U1016 ULTRA ACCOUNT - Another very good account program
U1017 PRO LOTTERY 96 - The very latest & best lottery program
U1018 PRO GREY HOUND - Like ProGamble but for dog
U1019 AUTO STEREO GRAM V4 - Latest Magic eye generator
U1021 ELECTRONIC ADDRESS BOOK
U1022 PRO-FOOTBALL 1.1 (2) - Football predictor like ProGamble
U1023 REMDATE - Remind important date
U1024 SHAPE-SHIFTER V3.3 The very latest Mac emulator
U1025 MESSY SID 3 - The latest PC<>AMIGA disk converter
U1026 HD GAME INSTALLER 4 - install loads more games to HD
U1027 SOFT-MEMORY - Double your computers memory. This version does not require HD or MMU. Give this a try Recommend
U1028 MAGIC-USER-INTERFACE V3.1 update to version 2.3
U1029 ORIC 48K EMULATOR (Not 1.3) At last it work
U1030 MSX II Emulator v2.1 (WB3.0) MSX computer on
U1031 900 AMIGA GAMES HIT & CHEAT V4 (2 disks)
U1032 VIRUS CHECKER V8.2 (not WB 1.3) Latest

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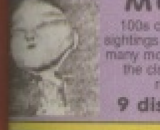
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U140 600 BUSINESS LETTER very handy. Get it now
U611 BUSINESS CARD MAKER - can Print in colour
U101 DATA BASE WORKSHOP (2) brilliant PACK
U121 SPREAD SHEET Very easy to used spreadsheet
U189 QUICK BASE Very powerful Database, Easy to use
U112 RIM DATABASE powerful database + full DOC
U195 AMIBASE - Professional II The best database yet
U227 TEXTRA Can edit several documents at once
U239 FLEXI BASE Small easy to operate database
U256 PENNY WISE very powerful Database
U297 VISICALC Great database lots o functions
U356 TEXT-ENGINE V3.4 - full feature wordprocessor
U343 LITTLE OFFICE - database/wordprocessor/spreadsheet
U345 HOME BUSINESS JOURNAL - easy to use database
U357 BON APPETIT DATABASE many receipt
U364 HOME ACCOUNT - Account program
U366 AMICASH regarded as the best account prog. Excellent
U369 JOURNAL full feature account program
U385 LORAN NOTE BOOK database & world map
U390 DATA BASE compilation - best sell to date
U399 MORTGAGE CALC calculate mortgage repayment rate etc
U436 MONEY PROGRAM very good account program
U437 ACCOUNT MASTER V2.8 new account program
U520 HOUSE INVENTORY - ideal for home insurance
U559 ADDRESS PRINT V2.1 store & print addresses
U567 TEXT-PLUS V4.0 pro requires HD & 2meg
U681 TEXT ENGINES V4.1 latest 36,000 word spellchecker
U686 INVENTORY 2 details of home contents, for insurance
U712 EDWORD PROFESSIONAL truly the best wordprocessor
U722 EASYCAL - massive spreadsheet max 92583 cells
U756 PAY ADVICE ANALAZER - money prog.
U802 ADDRESS PRINTING print addresses on labels
U889 PAY ADVICE V3 account program
U810 LABEL MAKER - print labels etc. new
U890 THE MONEY PROGRAM - Accounts
U901 LOANS ACCOUNT
U954 ONFORM One of the best Invoice makers
U969 ACCOUNT MASTER V2.2 (latest) program
& up to 1000 entries per account

18 DEMOS

MUST BE 18 OR OVER

X80 CINDY CRAWFORD (2)
X74 MADONA (SEX) (3)
X01 SHOWER GIRL
X03 BODY TALK (2)
X09 MARIE WHITTAKER
X24 SABRINA SPECIAL
X25 DIE FILKINGER
X26 MADONA EARLY DAY
X28 KATHY LLOYD
X30 MEGA-MAID
X31 CALENDER GIRL
X32 MAY FAIR
X33 UTOPIA (4 DISK)
X45 GIRLS OF SPORT
X49 PAGE 3 GIRL
X70 GON GON GIRL
X71 TINA SMALL hot
X91 CINDY CALENDAR 95
X96 HOT BABE 1
X97 HOT BABE 2
X98 HOT BABE 3
X99 HOT BABE 4
X100 HOT BABE 5
X101 BIG GIRL II
X102 FEMALE BODY BUILDER
X103 GIRLS GIRLS
X105 ELLE MACPHERSON
X106 CLAUDIA SCHIFIFER

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AGA21 MAGIC WB V1.2 THE LATEST MAGIC WB FOR A1200
U995 MAGIC WB 1.3 this is for the A500 1.3/A500plus & A600

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CD AMIGA

Welcome once more to CD-ROM Scene, your one-stop guide to all that's hot and happening with the Amiga and CD-ROM. This month we kick off with a feature dedicated to getting everyone set up with a CD-ROM drive regardless of the size of the available budget. With so much on offer from CD-ROM, not least our CUCD cover CDs, there's no reason why anyone should be missing out.
As usual we've got reviews of the latest commercial CD-ROM releases which this month include a neat 3D rendering disc and the complete collection of those popular Kara colour fonts. Finally there's your guide to what's on this month's cover mounted CUCD, which as usual is packed with software and our regular tune of the month audio track.

CD On The Cheap

It's now cheaper and easier than ever before to get your Amiga hooked up to a CD-ROM. In fact it can be done for as little as £50. For those with a bit more cash in the kitty we also investigate a variety of alternative options. Turn the page now to find out all about it.





CD-ROM Scene

- X-Ray 1
- The Kara Collection

What's on your cover CD?

Indeed, a good question and one that's answered on page 72.

BRILLIANT CD!





CD on the Cheap

A CD-ROM drive for £50? You must be joking. No, it's true you can make up your own CD-ROM drive without spending lots of cash. And here's how you can do it ...

Last time we looked at CD-ROM connections we concentrated on the SCSI options. This time we're looking at using ultra cheap IDE CD-ROM mechanisms with the existing A600, A1200 and A4000 IDE interfaces.

With a bit of knowledge about what's involved in getting and setting up your own CD-ROM drive you'll be in the best position to decide which package is best for you, whether you're deciding on a cheap DIY set-up or a more expensive complete fuss-free package from an Amiga dealer.

When it comes to choosing a CD-ROM drive the main choice is between SCSI and IDE. SCSI is one of the easier beasts to get up and running, mainly due to HiSoft's plug 'n' go Squirrel. However, boxed SCSI CD-ROM drives are quite expensive and you may not want to fork out for the extra expense of a Squirrel if there's no need for additional drives. In this case IDE CD-ROMs are a good option as they are reasonably priced and very easy to set up.

IDE CD-ROMs are the norm on the PC hence the lower cost. Unfortunately, the standard they use to talk to the host computer is not the same as for hard drives. In fact it's called 'ATAPI' or even more accurately 'SFF-8020'.

However, if we can ascertain that a CD-ROM mechanism is 100% compliant with that standard then it should work with your standard IDE interface and the ATAPI Plug 'n' Play software provided on this month's cover mounted cover disk and CD.

Make connections

Connecting up the CD-ROM mechanisms is fairly straightforward but it does involve opening up the Amiga and making sure you have the right cables. The AA600 and A1200 have a high-density 44 pin connector located at the top left of the motherboard which was designed for small 2.5" hard drives. So, similar to fitting cheaper/faster 3.5" hard drives internally, we need a cable which has the larger low-density 40 way connectors on one end with the high-density job on the other end to plug into the A600/A1200.

The simplest scenario is a cable with a single 44 way connector plugged into the A600/1200, trailed out to the left, terminating in a 40 way connector plugged into an IDE CD-ROM mechanism. This means that the case should happily screw back on with the cable between the top and bottom of the machine's case.

Note that the nearest screws should

not be fully tightened so as not to damage the cable. However, it's highly likely that you'd also have a hard drive connected. The cable(s) you'll need then depend on whether your drive is a 2.5" unit or a 3.5" unit. We found a few ways to do this so we're not going to put forward a definitive solution as it also depends on what happens outside of the machine.

There's two basic ways to proceed here, one is to leave the hard drive fitted internally and the other is to relocate the hard drive and the new CD-ROM device into a PC mini tower case or the like. This creates the next problem of how to house the CD-ROM mechanism and how to power it.

If a 3.5" hard drive is fitted internally as well as an accelerator card then your Amiga is already tempting fate power wise. Hacking the CD-ROM into the A1200's power supply is possible but whether your power supply can cope with it is uncertain. It might lead to crashes when the CD-ROM fires up as the 'final straw' barrier is reached. Solutions include using a replacement power supply such as the MicroniK unit or going down the PC mini tower route; powering the hard drive and CD-ROM separately.

HiQ in particular have an extremely useful mini tower system which has SCSI and IDE leads pre-fitted. What's more it has an Amiga power lead wired into the 250W power supply so it'll power a hard drive, CD-ROM, A1200 and provide housing and cabling. The HiQ 'Power Station' is priced at £99 but it could still be easily worth it for many considering a power supply alone costs already half of that.

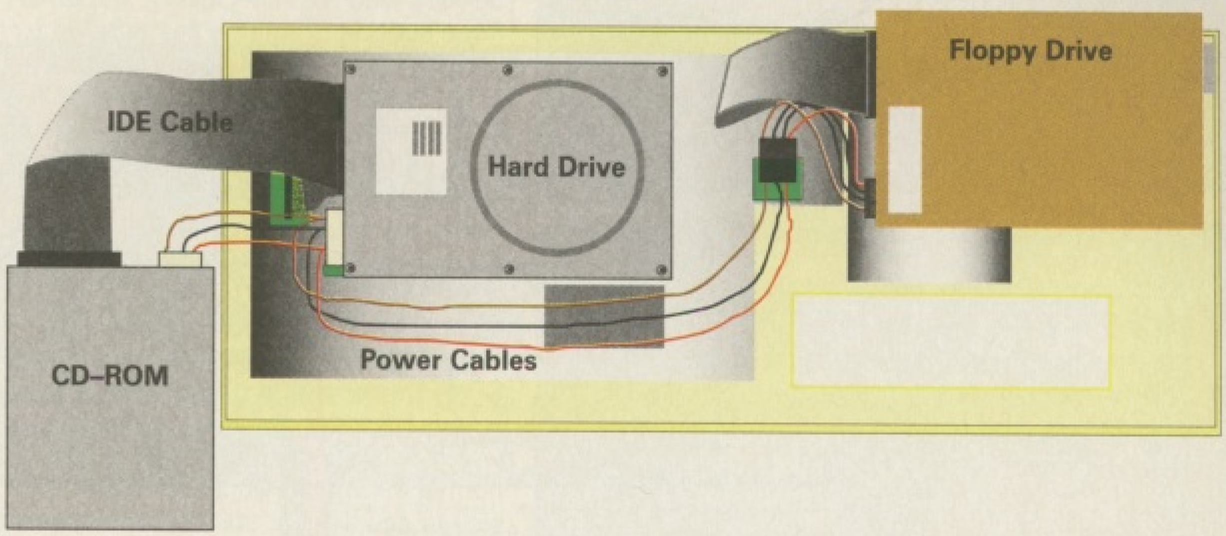
The Amiga 4000 doesn't have these same sorts of problems. In fact adding an ATAPI CD-ROM is quite basic. An IDE CD-ROM mechanism is simply loaded into the front panel 5.25" drive bay and connected to the internal power leads. Lastly the IDE cable connected to the internal hard drive already has a spare connector which is fitted to the CD-ROM mechanism. A jumper will need to be added to the hard drive if it's the original Seagate unit, (see the panel to the right for details). All that's needed then, is CU Amiga Magazine's cover disk software and Bob's your uncle.

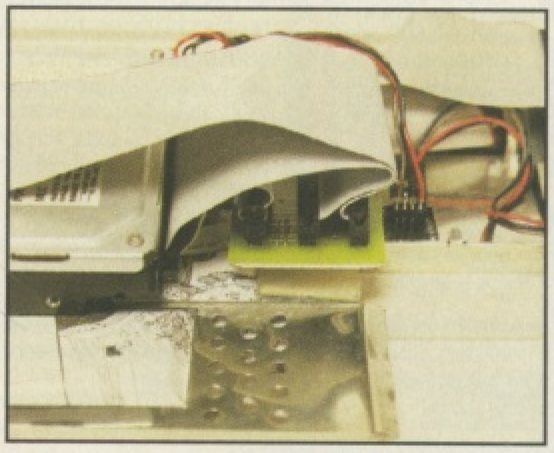
The software on the cover disk this month is the ATAPI Plug 'n' Play version 3, demo. Don't let the demo tag put you off, it works fine and doesn't time-out unlike the demo versions of IDEfix. You'll just be subject to a screen popping up occasionally reminding you that registering would be a good idea. It costs £15 for CU Amiga Magazine readers and can be obtained from Georg Campana with the coupon on page 64. You can also Email the author at georg@etruscan.li.it too.

Up and running

Installation of ATAPI is simple hence the Plug 'n' Play name. Firstly you'll need to click on Extract_ATAPI_PnP on the cover disk from Workbench. A requester will appear asking you where you'd like to extract the archive to. This is a temporary location where the package will be installed from, so RAM would be a good idea if you have the memory. After extracting, open up the drawer it created and click on the Install icon.

The installer will want the location of your boot drive, normally Sys:. It will place a preferences icon in Prefs, and three utilities in the Utilities drawer of your Workbench. ATAPI_PnP is quite happy to use any CD filesystem such as the superb AmiCDFS or AsimWare's commercial filesystem, however it also comes with its own superb FS called





The above diagram shows what's needed for the least expensive CD-ROM solution. The power for the IDE CD-ROM is obtained from the floppy drive port as it is with the fitted 3.5" hard drive. The hard drive's power connector is used to join the power going to the floppy power and the CD-ROM. The IDE cable is a low density 40 way cable but with a high density 44 way plug to the motherboard. There's a 40 way connector closeby for the hard drive, some cable and then another 40-way connector for the CD-ROM. The Alfa Quatro solution is far left.

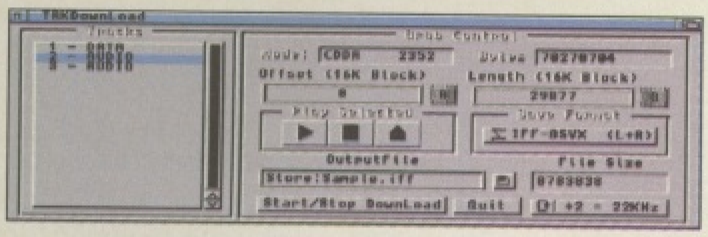
Masters and slaves

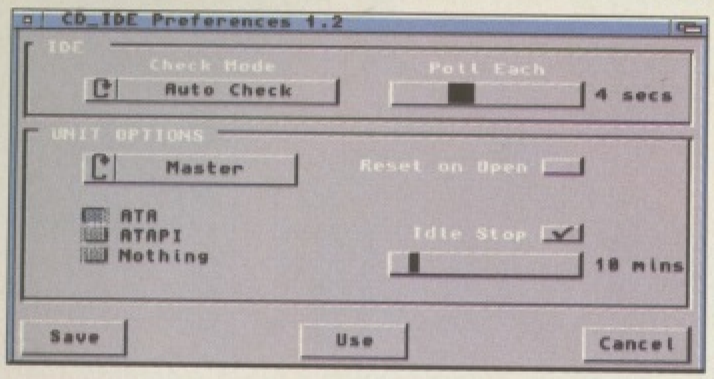
There are some issues concerning getting IDE CD-ROMs working with existing hard drives that need to be clarified. It is easier if you have documentation on your hard drive, specifically the details of the jumpers on how to set the drive from Master to Slave etc. Some thoughtful manufacturers have inscribed such diagrams on the hard drive itself. Sadly the problem is more serious with 2.5" drives, ours were totally undocumented and refused to work in their standard configuration. We do know that modern 2.5" drives are known to function correctly with second drives, providing the settings are known.

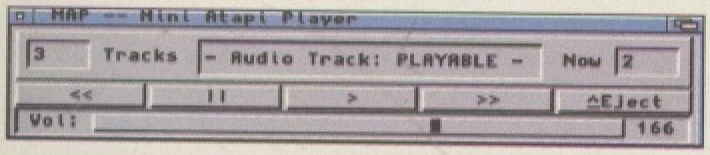
IDE hard drives have two or three mode settings as a rule: Master in a single drive system, Master in a dual drive system and Slave. Some drives only have Master and Slave. Most 3.5" hard drives will be set to Master and work right away. Some, such as the Seagate drives provided in A4000s, need the 'two drive system' jumper added. CD-ROMs are always set to Slave. Fortunately their jumpers are always labelled and it should come out of the box in Slave mode but check and make sure.

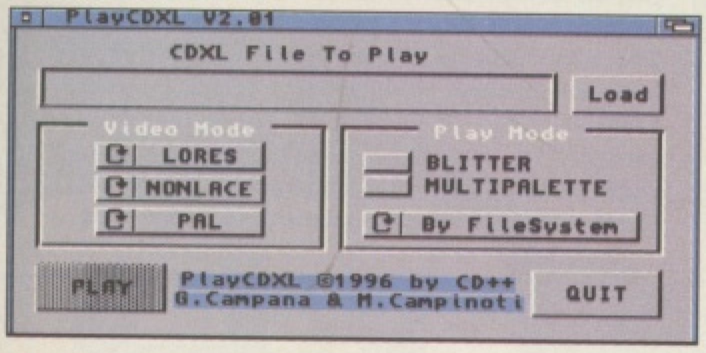
The sad part of using IDE is that some rare drives don't support the standard correctly and don't work with two drives, regardless of the other being a hard drive or a CD. If your 3.5" drive isn't very old then this shouldn't be a problem but it's unfortunately much more common with 2.5" drives. For safety's sake, we recommend testing 2.5" drives with another hard drive, if you're able, before lashing out on an IDE CD-ROM. Either that or make sure you're at liberty to return it or change hard drive for a newer model.

We'd like to stress that it is possible you may run into problems trying to get two devices working on the IDE bus. It's far less likely to happen if your drive is a modern 3.5" drive but still possible. In the advent of any problems, feel free to experiment with the jumper settings until your Amiga boots. You won't damage your machine by doing this so long as you confine any changes to the Master/Slave settings. Lastly, it's possible to have your hard drive boot but the system not recognise the CD-ROM, again this is usually remedied by jumper changes.









▲ Our cover mounted ATAPI Plug 'n' Play software is very easy to get around and set up on your new CD-ROM drive.

CDFS++ which is recommended.

When installation is complete, it should be a simple matter of rebooting your Amiga. If the IDE CD-ROM is correctly connected, an icon should appear for a CD if it's present in the CD-ROM, it's that simple.

The support programs provided with ATAPI_PnP are also simple, easy-to-use and impressive like the filesystem itself. Newly installed into the Prefs drawer is the CD IDE preferences. In all probability this won't need to be touched but it's possible to hard set the types of devices on the IDE bus including the so-called second-channel which provides two more devices with the Alfa Quatro. The other three support programs are installed to the Utilities drawer of your Workbench drive. TRKdownload downloads CDDA or CD Digital Audio direct from CD and converts to IFF samples. It will even down-sample it from 44Khz to 22 and 11Khz as needs be. You will need an IDE CD-ROM that supports CDDA access over the IDE bus for this program to work.

Next up is a CDXL player which is extremely competent if you have any CDXL animations to play, rare as they are. Finally, MAP is a tiny mini audio player which controls the IDE CD-ROM to play as normal through its audio out jacks. It's nice to see the IDE standard must incorporate a volume control for the audio level out as the slider actually changes the volume which is quite handy. And that's it now you've got your own CD drive ready to rock and roll with.

Prices

Now that you are well informed of exactly what needs to be done in order to get your CD-ROM connected and working away happily, it's time to shop around. Here's a list of current prices for you to check out and see for yourself.

HiQ Systems
(tel: 01525 211 327)

- PowerStation SCSI + IDE - Mini Tower with 250W power supply, SCSI leads and long IDE (44way to 2 x 40 way), Amiga power connector and audio leads. **£99**
- PowerStation + 8 speed Samsung IDE CD-ROM. **£179.95**
- 8X Samsung IDE CD-ROM + IDE cable. **£99.95**

Golden Image
(tel: 0181 900 9291)

- External IDE CD-ROM kit - Metal case, floppy drive power connector, external power supply connector, IDE 40 to 40 cable, stereo audio cables. **£39**
- CD1200 - External PCMCIA IDE controller for A600/1200 .... **£59**
- IDE CD-ROM kit and CD-1200 external PCMCIA controller. **£129**
- Alfa Quatro 40 way splitter PCB, 1 in and 2 out (with two drives on each out) plus IDEfix software and cables...... **£59, £39** without software.
- Alfa Duo 2.5" drive cable splitter PCB/cable which provides 40 way connector. .... **£59 with IDEfix**, ... **£20 without (!).**

Cable kits

- 44 way = 2.5" low density connectors, 40 way = 3.5" low density connectors
- 44 way cable to 40 way with power splitter cable. (300mm) **£15**
- 44 way cable to 44 way. (60mm) **£5**
- 44 way cable to 44 way to 44 way. (120mm) **£10**
- 40 way cable to 40 way to 40 way. (900mm) **£10**
- 40 way cable to 40 way. (400mm)...... **£5**

IDE CD-ROM drives known to work

Mitsumi FX 001DE/FX300/FX400/FX600
Aztek 2x/4x (CDU 268031 SE)
Chinon CDS-545
Toshiba XM-5302B
Wearnes CDD-220A
Acer 6825-P
Wearnes CDD-120A
Chinon CDS-525I
Sony CDU-55E
Acer CD 743E, 2x & 6X
SONY 76E
Turtle Beach 8x
Samsung 8X
Creative labs CD 220E
Oty Scylla 2X
Goldstar GLD R520B/R540B/R560
Vertos 300HPD/400HPD
Philips PCA 21CR/52CR
Wearnes CDD-120A
Reveal 4x
Nec CDR 273
Matsushita CR 581J
Lxycon CDM 220
Toshiba XM 5302

HiSoft
(tel: 01525 718 181)

Here are the new CD-ROM packs and prices, all currently based on SCSI CD-ROMs and including Classic Squirrel or Surf Squirrel and three free CD-ROM titles (currently AGA Experience 2, Bitstream 500-font pack and Aminet 11):

- Dual speed SCSI CD-ROM and Squirrel **£159.95**
- Surf Squirrel **£189.95**
- Quad speed SCSI CD-ROM and Squirrel **£199.95**
- Surf Squirrel **£229.95**
- 12 (!) speed SCSI CD-ROM and Squirrel **£299.95**
- Surf Squirrel **£329.95**

Note: Surf Squirrel includes high speed serial port.

- Compaq 2X SCSI CD-ROM, no squirrel and no CDs. **£89.95**

Siren Software
(tel: 0161 796 5279)

- Compaq 2X external SCSI CD-ROM, no Squirrel and no CDs. **£89.95**
- Compaq 2X external SCSI CD-ROM and Squirrel plus 2 CDs. **£129.95**

OK now you've seen the prices. Take your time decide which option is best for you. Remember to shop around for competitive prices and you could end up with a top value working CD-ROM drive. Now all you need to do is fill in the coupon far left to register your copy of ATAPI Plug n Play and you're sorted.

If you still have a few questions that we haven't covered in this article turn to page 66 for the answers to the most commonly asked questions about CD-ROM drives.

ATAPI Plug n Play

Please complete this coupon to register your version of this excellent software on CU Amiga Magazine's cover disk and CD and send it to the address below.

To: Georg Campana, Via Indipendenza, 134
I-57029 Venturina (LI), Italy

I would like the full version of the ATAPI Plug 'n' Play version 3 software, complete with printed manual, the CD32 emulator and DV_Lab, a Video-Editing program. I have enclosed £15 payment for the CU Amiga special offer which covers the cost of the package and postage. My payment is either a Euro- cheque, postal order or cash at my own risk.

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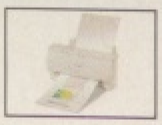
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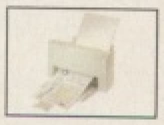
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MONITORS



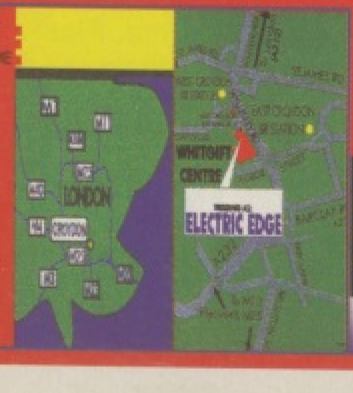
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Q&A

Connecting up your own CD drive is a very complex matter which would need a small book on it to cover everything. However, here are some of the more common problems that you may come across.

Q I have a Squirrel and a Zip drive but I want to add a CD-ROM. Will IDE be cheaper for me?

A Perhaps but Siren's Compaq SCSI CD-ROM complete with power supply is £89 and will be much easier to connect.

Q I have an A600/1200 with 60Mb 2.5" hard drive internally but I want a bigger hard drive and a CD-ROM.

A While it may be possible to get three devices to work on your IDE bus, your 2.5" unit, a larger hard drive and a CD-ROM, it's quite likely that your 2.5" drive won't want to play ball. For that reason it will be far easier to get rid of it totally and replace with a cheap 3.5" hard drive which will work perfectly with a CD-ROM. You won't even notice 60Mb after upgrading to a cheap 540, 850 or 1Gb hard drive.

Q OK, so I have or will buy an internal 3.5" hard drive, what do I really need to get it working with my A1200?

A This is the most common set-up so we'll look at it in some depth; You'll need a cable first. It will have to go from the A1200's high density IDE port, then go to the 3.5" IDE and then have some length to leave the case and go to an IDE mechanism. The DIY option is to make the cable by buying the necessary cable, connectors and creating the lead, external box and wiring it up to a power supply. In this event it should be possible to put together a CD-ROM for £50.

Alternatively, it can be done with a single cable (such as HiQ's but Golden Image also sell useful cables) or with Golden Image's Alfa Quatro (which you can buy without software) and the 3.5" adapter cable you should have got if you bought the drive from an Amiga dealer. The single cable can be bought from HiQ for around £15 according to your own specification.

The CD-ROM can be powered either from an external power supply (the MicroniK unit has very handy power connectors) or wired up to the A1200's floppy drive power connector with a bit of DIY soldering. This will get messy since there's already your 3.5" hard drive wired up to this. Golden Image's external IDE CD-ROM kit is idea as it takes power from the floppy drive port with a special cable and provides neat audio cables and a case. There's even a connector for using a separate power supply externally if the need arises.

Golden Image's kit costs £40 but unfortunately it's supplied with the wrong cable (no 2.5" header) so you'd need to replace it with a HiQ cable or the like or couple with an Alfa Quatro but that's getting expensive for a simple splitter PCB to make up for the lack of the right cable. The Golden Image external case and a HiQ IDE lead comes to about £65. With a dirt cheap dual/quad IDE CD-ROM, it could be done nicely for around £100.

Alternatively grab HiQ's PowerStation which will power the Amiga. You can fit your hard drive and CD-ROM and power those and it comes with the cables and audio connections. Expensive just for CD at £99 with no mechanism but that includes the superb power supply. HiQ will supply the Power Station with a wonderfully fast 8X Samsung CD-ROM for £179.95 or the Samsung 8X CD-ROM and IDE cable by itself for £99.

Q I have an A4000 and want to add a CD-ROM.

A Easy, get a cheap ATAPI CD-ROM of your chosen specifications. Try to find a shallow model since the A4000's drive bay is remarkably small, otherwise it might poke out the front panel or if forced back obscure the power supply cooling fan. If you've got the original Seagate drive, you'll need to add a jumper on the 'two drive system' jumper then simply attach the spare IDE header and power connector to the CD-ROM.

Q I have an A4000 but I've got two hard drives and want to add a CD-ROM.

A It's still possible since the ATAPI standard allows four devices. You'll need something like the Alfa Quatro, reviewed last issue, since this will connect to the motherboard IDE connector and allow your existing drives to plug into it as well as another cable with two connectors. The second cable should be connected to the CD-ROM.

Q I have an A4000T, it's got IDE as well as SCSI, which one should I use?

A On our A4000T, using the IDE port seems to crash the machine so from our experience it would be better to add a SCSI CD-ROM mechanism.

Q I want to add an extra hard drive and CD-ROM to my A1200 which already has an internal 3.5" hard drive.

A Not a problem though again you'll need the Alfa Quatro splitter PCB. One cable with two connectors will run off the second 'out' connector to connect to the hard drive and CD-ROM externally. Housing and powering a hard drive and CD-ROM will prove tricky so a mini tower would be the best bet. In that case it would be better to locate both hard drives and CD-ROM to the tower. That way the Alfa Quatro PCB would be placed inside the tower with a single cable going from the A1200 into the tower and the PCB splitter board.

Q It's vital that you can download audio (CDDA) directly from CD. Are IDE CD-ROMs capable of this or should I go for SCSI?

A Yes they are and you'll find software to do this on the cover disk. The problem is that not all IDE CD-ROMs support this feature. If this is particularly valuable then you'll need to enquire as to whether an IDE CD-ROM supports direct CDDA downloading. HiQ's 8X Samsung is one that does.

Q I have an A500 and I want to add a CD-ROM

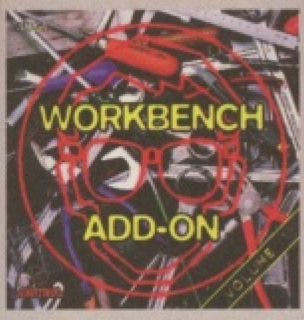
A The best bet is to try to obtain a secondhand A570 external CD-ROM, if you have a hard drive box with a SCSI connector, Siren's Compaq external SCSI CD-ROM would be a good option for £90. Alfa Data controller owners could take up Golden Image on their quad speed CD-ROM unit which costs £129.00

Q I loved your feature on setting up CD-ROM drives. However, I still have lots more questions that I need answering. Please help?

A We're glad you enjoyed the feature. If you have any more queries that you'd like answered please write to us at Q&A, CU Amiga Magazine, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. In the meantime enjoy your new CD-ROM drive.

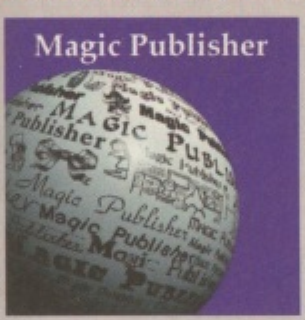
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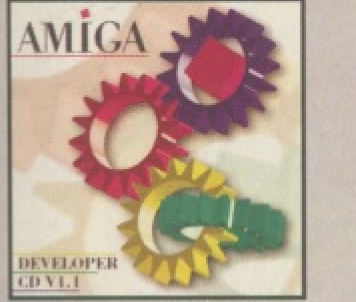
Workbench Add-On Volume 1

The Workbench Add-On CD-ROM is the ideal companion to your Workbench. On this CD you will not only find the best programs, that are available for the Amiga, but you will also get them ready-to-run on the CD. In addition to this there is an installer script that installs the desired programs to your harddisk.
The CD covers all areas of interest, all, the programmer, the user, the creative and the gamer will find what they are looking for. On this CD-ROM there are many shareware programs, some of them at a special price, if you get registered. There is e.g. Shapeshifter for 40.- DM (instead of 50.- DM), in addition to this there is a 50 MB Mac partition, so that you can start playing around with Mac applications right away. Then there is PowerPlayer for 20.- DM (instead of 30.- DM), there are, of course, loads of modules with it, so that you can try it right away. AmiWin, the new X11-server for the Amiga is available for $40, instead of $50. You can so ve more than 100.- DM with this CD. Therefore you only have to send in the appropriate page in the booklet to the author of the program. £24.95



Magic Publisher

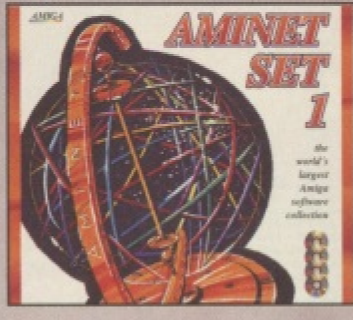
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Amiga Developer CD v1.1

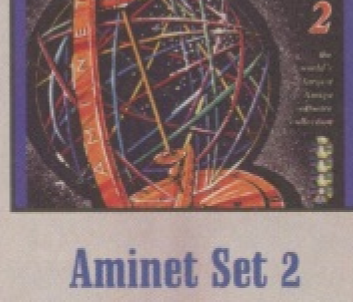
The official developer CD from Amiga Technologies contains all the material you need to start developing software forAmiga computers. This includes: The CD32 developer package. In addition to the original five disk set distribution you will find the "BuildCD" CD writer package Packages contributed by 3rd parties: The WBPath and ActionFSSM packages, courtesy of Ralph Babel; The Envoy v2.0 developer kit, courtesy of IAM, Inc.; The INet 225 developer kit, version 2, courtesy of Interworks, Inc.; The Kiskometer package, courtesy of Angelo Schmidt; The Enforcer v37.64, courtesy of Mike Sinz. Information in support of forthcoming operating system developments. Additional developer material: BOOPSI gadget and image classes; The AmigaOS 2.04 example code, as part of the original 2.04 Native Developer Kit; The RKM 2.04 code examples; The complete set of registered IFF forms; IFF example and stress test files; All IFF packages released by Commodore-Amiga, Inc., covering 1986 through 1992; The camd v37.1 MIDI developer kit; The SANA-II standard package and developer kit; The Installer v43.1 package. International support material: Sample text using the full ISO-8859-1 character set; Translation guidelines. The updated 3.1 Native Developer Kit: "C" and assembly language header files, linker and runtime libraries; System documentation and tutorial texts; Example code covering the Amiga OS 3.0 and 3.1 features; The NewIFF v39 package; The AmigaGuide and DataTypes documentation and example code. Reference material: The collection of AmigaGuide Volume 1 articles, covering Spring 1987 through January/February 1989; The complete AmigaGuide Volume 2 articles in AmigaGuide format, covering January/February 1990 through March/April 1993; also included are the printable issues in PostScript and PageStream format; Hardware related articles; The Includes & Autodocs in AmigaGuide format. £14.95

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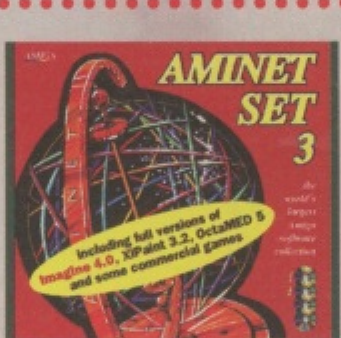
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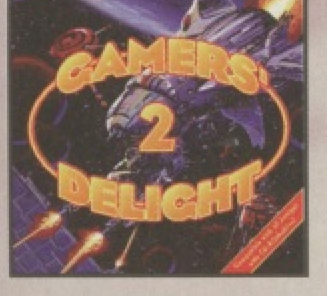
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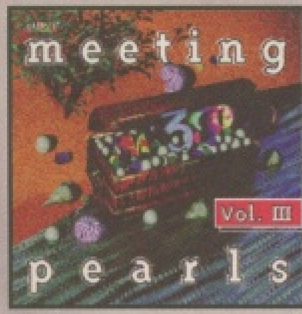
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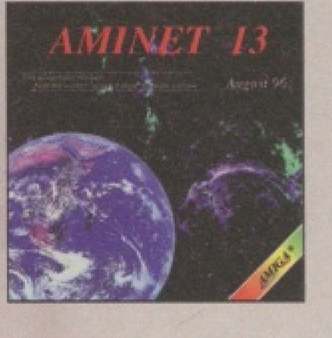
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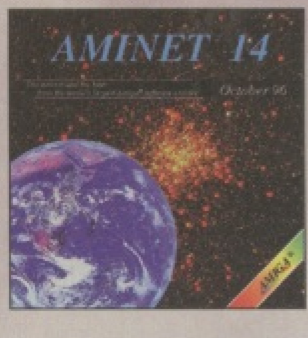
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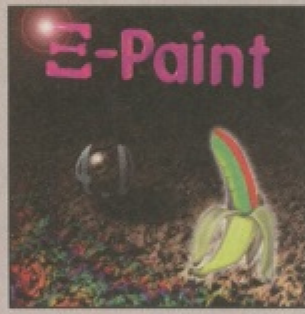
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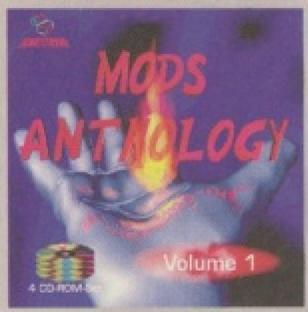
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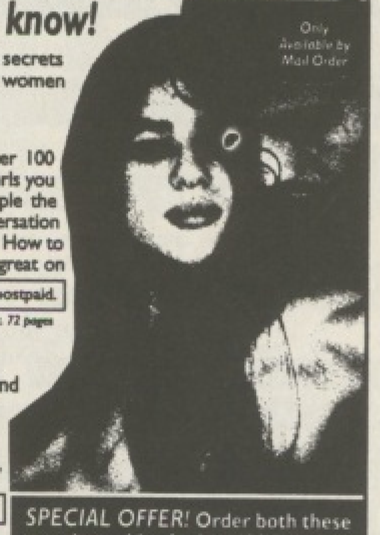
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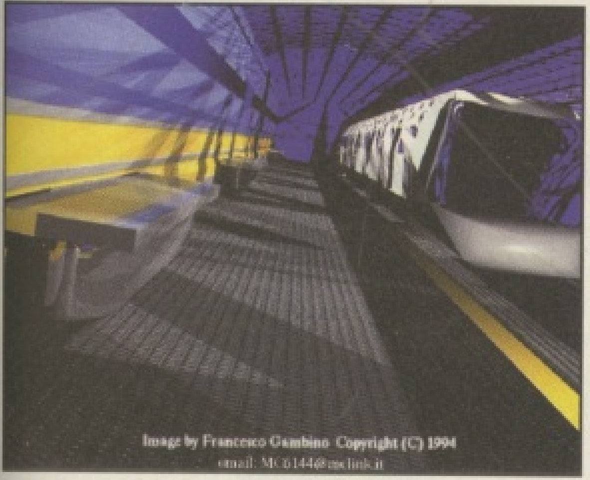
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This CD is not the biggest or most comprehensive collection of 3D objects ever but it's certainly the most usable and best presented we've seen.

The 442Mb of data on the CD is accounted for with approximately 24Mb of 24-bit backdrop images, 30Mb of LHA-archived objects (for use with BBS systems), 9Mb of DEM landscape files, 102Mb of pictures and animations, 10Mb of graphics software, 56Mb of Imagine objects, 24Mb of LightWave objects, 19Mb of preview renders, 3Mb of PostScript fonts and 178Mb of textures.

Instead of having to sift through the contents with a combination of picture viewers and 3D programs you can use the neat AmigaGuide index. This allows you to list and view all the objects, backdrops, landscape DEMs, pictures and animations from one place which makes it easy to get a good overall view of what's on the disc. The AmigaGuide index uses small or low resolution preview renders from the Prev drawer on the CD. However, some of the objects also have their own preview JPEG renders in their own drawers which tend more detailed.

One of the most entertaining sections, if not the most useful, is the Gallery. This is home to some excellent 3D animations and loads of pictures. Even though the animations are fairly short there are a few gems, like the LightWave rendered campfire complete with crackling sparks, and the Blade Runner sequence also created with LightWave.

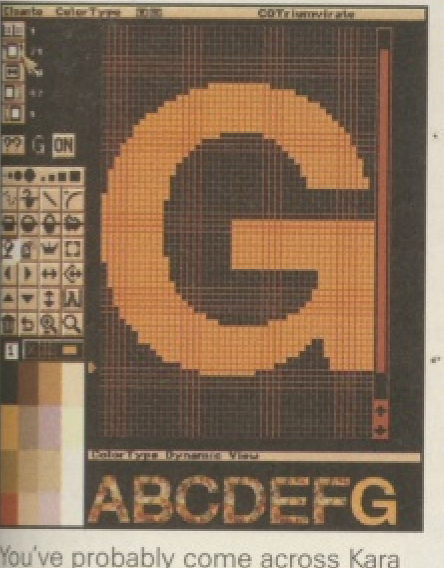
So while you may be able to get larger object collections elsewhere, X-Ray 1 offers a good quality, well-rounded CD for general 3D rendering work. At the moment we don't have details of a UK distributor but there should be quite a few of the regular CD-ROM crowd supplying this one.

Available from: Software Store, Münchingerstrasse 30, 71254 Ditzingen, Germany. Tel/fax: (0049) 7156 951 212. Price: £18.



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The Kara Collection



You've probably come across Kara fonts – they're the multicoloured fonts that seem to get everywhere in Amigaland, all created by the same person, a particularly dedicated Amiga user called Kara. Font fans will be pleased to hear that this CD is the ultimate archive of these colour typefaces, officially compiled by the Personal Paint people at Cloanto. There are 28 colour fonts on the CD included in a number of different sizes, bumping up the total to 80.

One of the most popular uses for colour fonts is within video titles. Anyone looking to go a step further with their titles will be delighted to find a set of special 'anim fonts' on the CD. These are like normal Kara fonts but each letter is stored as an animbrush. These allow you to make up titles that spin around (one letter at a time) or are drawn out on screen as if by hand. The animbrush format allows them to be used with all sensible animation software, including DPaint, PPaint and Brilliance. However, as a special bonus for PPaint users there's an ARexx macro script included on the CD which automates the animation procedure – all you have to do is select your font, enter the text into a box and the letters are then animated in your chosen style. The final result is a standard animation. These are fun to work with so it's a shame there are only five of these animated fonts.

Two font design programs are also included: Personal Fonts Maker for standard bitmap fonts and Colour Type for colour fonts. The rest of the 650Mb of data on the CD is mainly taken care of with backdrops referred to as 'Plaquegrounds', specifically stone and wood textures with bevelled edges useful for mounting text. A few starfield animations are included too.

Everything is tied together neatly with an AmigaGuide document that not only details what's on the CD, but also launches slideshows and tutorials to give you a better idea of how to use the contents. Anyone still looking for a complete colour fonts collection need look no further. Should be available from Digita International in the UK soon.

Available from: Cloanto Italia SRL, PO 118, 33100 Udine, Italy. Tel: +39 432 545902. Price: £34.95.



80%

What's on Super

Yet another top quality CD rolls off the CU Amiga Magazine production line. As usual it's full of all that you possibly wish for and more.

How to use CUCD5



As with prior cover CDs, CUCD5 can be used either by booting on a CD32 or A1200/4000 with adequate CD32 emulation. The CD will not boot under any kickstart earlier than 3.0. If using the CD via Workbench and intending to run software directly off the CD then it's important to first click on the 'Init CD' icon. This sets up various assigns and makes MUI 3.6 temporarily available if it is not already installed.

It's worth noting that running software directly from CD is a touch-and-go business. While we've gone to a lot of effort to make many programs run from the CD, others may have to be dragged to your hard drive either manually or by running an included installer. 'Init CD' also runs the New Icons patch so don't be surprised if the icons change afterwards.

A word on demos and games

Demos and games are almost never coded in a so-called OS Legal way. That means that while they may work for us, they might not work for you for several reasons. Either your hardware set-up is slightly different or some third party software running on your Amiga may upset the demo or consume resources that the demo/game requires. Please do not assume the CD is 'faulty' if any of this software refuses to run.

There are things you can do to make the software more likely to run. Closing down any exiting running software, screens and such forth will free up resources. It might be better to cut to the chase and copy the demo/game onto your hard drive and then boot with no startup sequence. This involves resetting and holding down both mouse buttons, then press start with no startup-sequence.

You'll then be placed into the AmigaDOS so you'd need to know enough about that aspect of your Amiga to navigate to where the offending software is and run it. As a general rule, if the game or demo still doesn't work then it's incompatible with your machine. Some demos will only ever work when run in this fashion. If you get a requester asking for a specific volume then the software needs 'assigns' set up and so is fairly likely it has an installer that should have been run.



CD audio track: Analyzer

To be played on any hi-fi CD player, this month's CD audio track comes from the acclaimed mod composer Eric Gieseke, AKA Sidewinder. It's a tune from 1995 using four channels, which you may find hard to believe when you hear it. Sidewinder can be contacted via Email at sidewinder@crl.com. If you have a tune you think is good enough to be included on a forthcoming CUCD, send it to CD Contributions, CU Amiga, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

What's in your drawers

When the Super CD 5 icon (called CUCD5) is opened from the Workbench you'll notice that things have changed yet again from CUCD4. We're striving for the best lay-out and responding to what readers have asked for. For a more standard style of layout and to simplify the directory structure, Workbench is no-longer located inside a draw by itself. The Workbench 3.1 drawers such as Prefs, System, Utilities and Tools are in the root directory. There's no Support drawer and everything normally found in this drawer has been appropriately moved into Tools, System and Utilities. The Magazine drawer has also moved into the CUCD drawer.

In the root directory of CUCD5;

Wordworth 3.1



This drawer contains the full version of Digita's WordWorth 3.1 SE. In addition to this superb word processing package is a massive collection of IFF clip art and Intellifont scalable fonts for use with WordWorth. These are housed in the drawers called ClipArt and ExtraFonts. Note that WordWorth 3.1 SE will run from the CD (providing it was booted or InitCD has been run) but it's recommended you install to hard drive with the HD-Install icon.

Worms - The Director's Cut

At last Team 17's Worms gets an update on the Amiga. Even better, this one is the personal baby of the programmer, Andy Davidson and so features a great deal that other platforms will never see. This very special Demo of Worms – The Director's Cut, can also be run on CD32s and CD32 emulation by simply holding down the left mouse button when booting from the CD.

Utilities

Multiview, Clock and some tools for working with NewIcon images can be found here.

Tools

Contains the Workbench 3.1 tools drawer.

Prefs

The Workbench 3.1 preferences drawer and NewIcon prefs.

System

The 3.1 system drawer in addition to the Support drawer from CUCD4. The latest versions of MUI 3.6, PPShow, Visage, Flick, Parnet, NewIcons, HappyENV, GMPlay, Play16, DeliTracker and SuperView are all crammed here to aid access to the rest of the CD.

WWW

We've gone to town on the CD Web site this month. There's a massive 150Mb of Internet WWW sites which be browsed directly off the CD without need of an Internet connection. Special CD Amiga versions of the premier Web browsers, AWeb and IBrowse, are provided to access the site where an improved main menu system is now included for easier navigation around this treasure trove of information and entertainment.

CD-ROM 5?



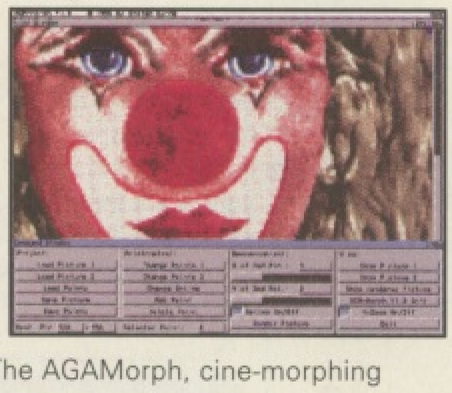
Inside the CUCD drawer;



On-line
Another collection of goodies for Internet users. Included is a full Aminet index, a MUD system, Term and Ncomm Terminal package, AmIRC and Chatbox IRC clients and more.

Programming
There's a great collection of material for Amiga programmers here. For AMOS coders, there's the Reality art collection and AMOS pack tutorials and example code. C programmers are catered for with the PowerVisor debugger and the ixemul Unix port/emulation library development set. An Amiga port of the Perl scripting language is also included.

Graphics



This month, CUCD5 has a massive collection of Icon manipulation utilities in the IconTools subdirectory. Virtually everything you'll ever need to do with icons can be found here. Among the rest of the material is ImageEngineer an Australian programmed powerful image processing package and a collection of Animation players of all types. The AGAMorph, cine-morphing package can also be found here.

Readers
We've held over the bulk of the readers' material for the Christmas issue. However we've put some interesting material such as Ian Chisholm's guide to a CD drive for £50, timely looking at this month's 'CD on the cheap' feature. There's also Dennis Eij's excellent collection of artwork to look over.

CD-ROM
Here you'll find software for CD-ROM drives including an Aminet find package for Aminet CD ROMs, OptyCDPlayer, Groovyplayer and a demo of the brand new 'Burn It' CD writing software. Note: You can find the ATAPI_PnP software in the Magazine drawer.

Demos
As usual we've included all the latest top 'scene' demos including the awesome SlipStream (which you may need to boot from no-startup to run) and many many others. There's hours of demo viewing entertainment to be found here.

Previews



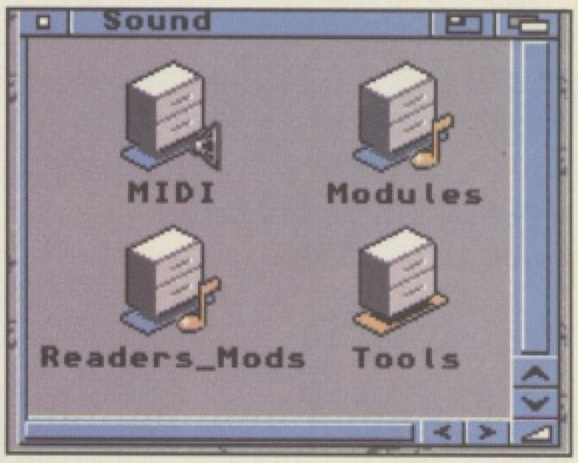
In the previews drawer on CUCD5 you can find some previews of Sadeness Software's CD-ROMs and many more which are all from a HTML/WWW interface. To view them all you have to is click on the icon which will then will activate a browser on their pages.

Information



Here you'll find an AmigaGuide to France and collection of 300 press releases. Most of this month's information resources are in the WWW drawer in the root of the CD.

Utilities



This bumper drawer contains a sub drawer called Datatypes with virtually every Datatype on the Amiga. There's a collection of powerful Commodities such as the amazing all singing-all dancing 'MCP'. The hard drive drawer contains Power-Cache, MrBackup, ABackup, Disksalve, Reorg and more. The latest version of SnoopDOS can be found here as well as ToolManager and other assorted and essential utilities designed to make life easier.

Sound
We finish off our massive General MIDI file collection for use with GMPlay. There's also a selection of modules and audio related tools including AudioLab16, DASModPlayer, ExoticRipper, AmiSOX and much much more. Audio heads should find plenty of sonic related material.

Games
Entertainment central with a collection of PD and demo games. As always we can't guarantee that they'll work on your particular Amiga so do read whatever documentation is provided, checking system requirements and so on. Be sure to check out Vulcan Software's new Jet Pilot Demo and the amazing Fields of Battle strategy war game. Those looking for a quick blast can't go past Mega Typoon either.

Driving CUCDs
Generally driving CUCDs is as simple as clicking on an icon of something you want to run, play, see etc. You should find it will automatically activate a player, viewer or run the program without further ado. Of course if you access CUCD5 from a directory utility, then you can use your own preference of players, viewers etc on the specific files.

We can't emphasise enough the importance of clicking on any readme or other documentation files inside each directory. There's simply too much material for us to detail here so you'll have to explore, read the documentation and see if each program or whatever is of use or interest to you.

So have fun exploring CUCD5 and don't forget to send us any work of your own so we can include it on later CDs! Also feel free to write into the magazine and tell us what you'd like to see on future CDs or how you'd like to see them organised. Address all letters of this topic to CD Editor. Enjoy!

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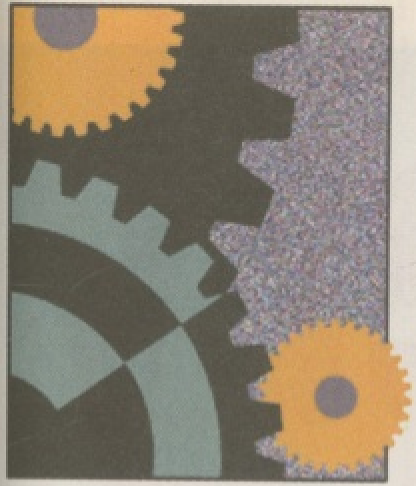
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Amiga Workshop



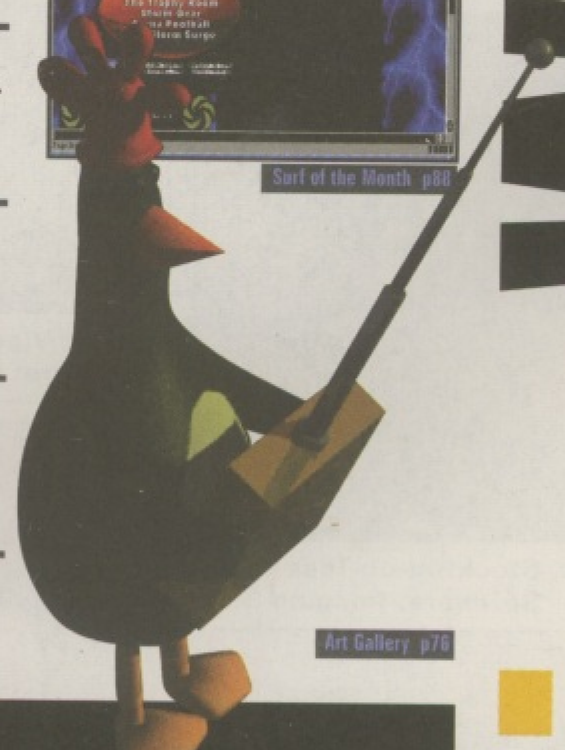
New this month to Workshop is the first part of a 3D rendering series that will uncover many advanced tricks and techniques for use with all 3D graphics packages.



3D Rendering p78



Surf of the Month p88



Art Gallery p76

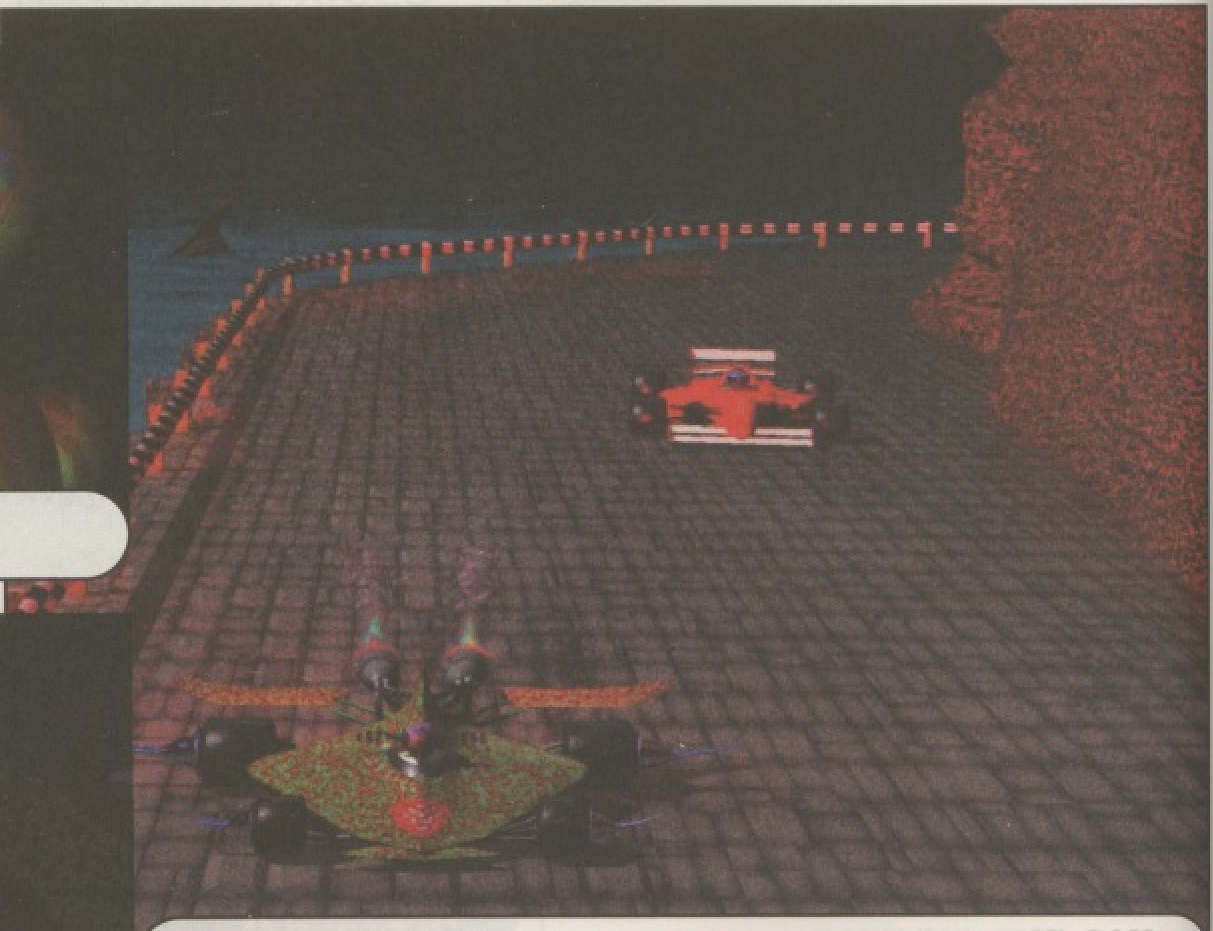
Feedback

Art Gallery

Forget 'Take Hart' (if you're old enough to remember it), take part in our top quality line up of Amiga art.



Artist: Graeme Kennedy Amiga: AGA
Software: Real3D 1.3 and DPaintV



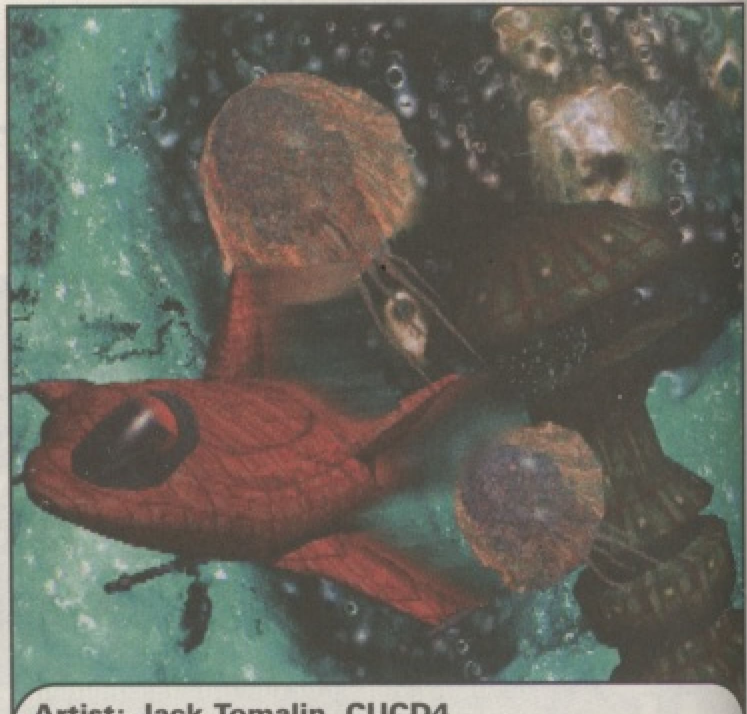
Artist: Vince Parry, Wales Amiga: A4000/030, 16Mb RAM
Software: Imagine V3



Artist: Jeff McDermont, Stockton-on-Tees
Amiga: AGA Software: Imagine 3



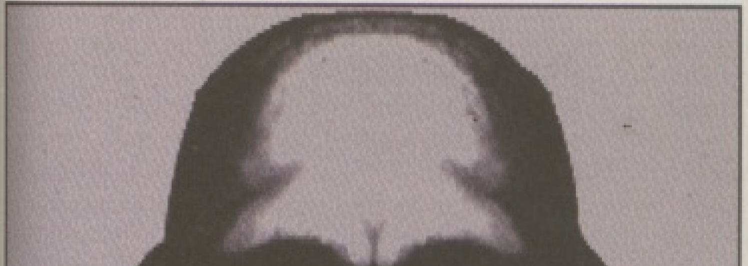
Artist: Jack Tomalin, CUCD4
Amiga: AGA Software: LightWave 3.5



Artist: Jack Tomalin, CUCD4
Amiga: AGA Software: LightWave 3.5



Artist: Mohanaraj, mohangk@pl.jaring.my
Amiga: AGA Software: ImageFX 1.5 and Imagine 3.0



Artist: Graeme Kennedy, CUCD4 Amiga: AGA
Software: Real3D 1.3 and DPaintV



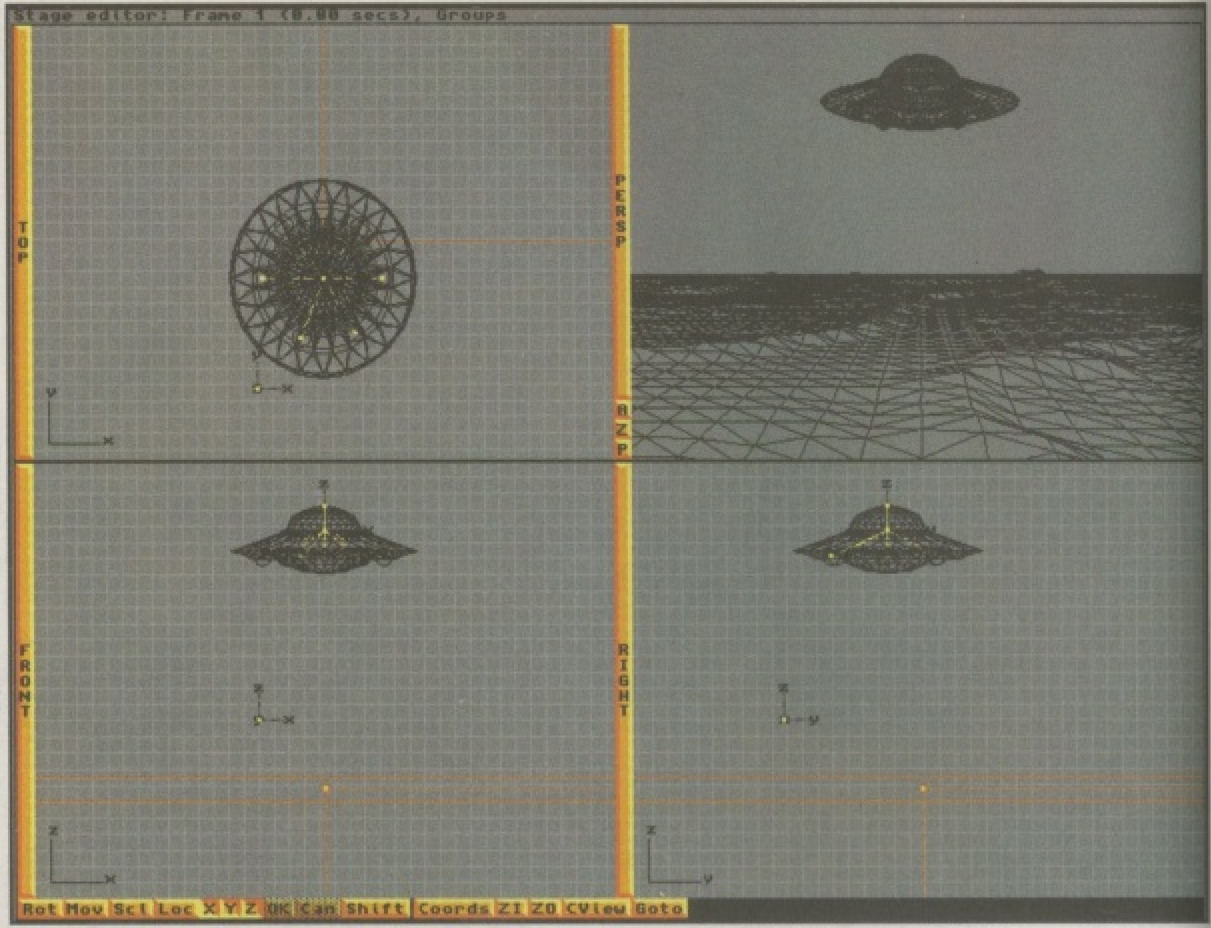
3D Rendering

PART 1 **The perfect pair: rendering and the Amiga. Welcome to a new series dedicated to their heavenly union.**

Ray tracing and the Amiga go back a long way, as anyone old enough to remember the Juggler demo will tell you. The Amiga was the first affordable computer that could create realistic images out of thin air. To its credit, it was also the first that could display them with enough colours. However, that was a long time ago when the A500 was state-of-the-art and I earned the occasional crust by reviewing awesome hardware such as a 68020 accelerator and unbelievable software like Sculpt3d.

Things have progressed much further since then and rendering is pretty much par for the course, these days, with high profile programs such as Babylon5 and practically all big feature films demonstrating how good computer graphics can look.

So, in the first of a new series, we take a look at the past and present of image rendering on the Amiga.



▲ Rendering programs allow you to create and place objects anywhere in your virtual world. In the above example I'm playing around with my favourite object: a space ship. Always a good thing to have a go at rendering.

What is rendering?

A rendering program takes a three dimensional model held in computer memory and creates a two dimensional image. The model is then created using a special program which allows its shape, colour and other attributes to be altered as the user sees fit.

The model can then be placed in a virtual world, moved around and scaled. Other objects can be included such as light sources to provide illumination, backdrops and the ground. A virtual camera can then be positioned and pointed in the right direction. Finally the image will be rendered, as the computer determines what the camera would 'see'. The image is then displayed or saved to disk.

The sums involved in this process can be extremely complicated and so rendering the image can be a very time consuming task. Even on the fastest Amiga, a detailed high-resolution image can take many hours to create. That said, a simple image in low-resolution can be generated on even an unexpanded A1200 within a few moments.

Ray tracing

Ray tracing is a special case of image rendering. However, not all image rendering is ray traced, far from it. Most of the images you'll see are instead generated with 'scan line' algorithms which calculate how the image appears line by line, pixel by pixel.

For every pixel the computer arranges the objects by depth and then calculates which the camera would see. It takes into account the colour and texture of the objects and how any light reaching them will make them appear.

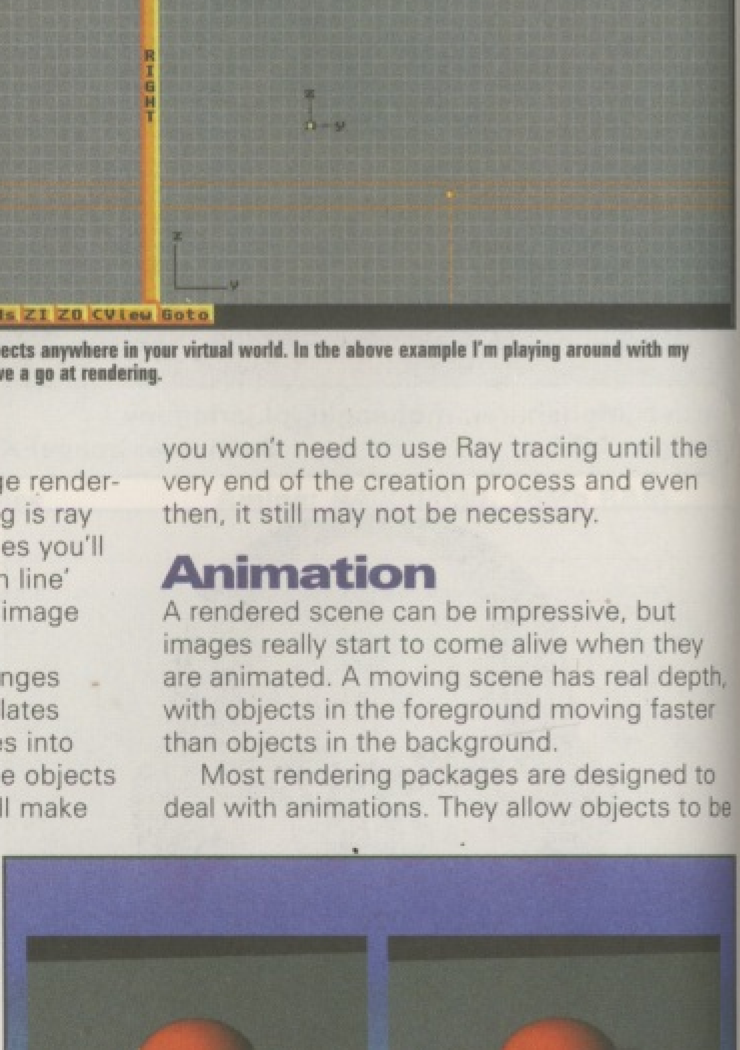
Ray tracing works slightly differently to the scan line method. Instead, every pixel in the display is imagined as a beam of light reaching the camera. The software then traces it back into the scene, calculating how it will have been reflected off surfaces or distorted by passing through transparent objects.

Ray tracing takes a lot longer than scan line algorithms but it makes it possible to accurately create shadows and complicated optical effects. A lot of the time you won't need to use Ray tracing until the very end of the creation process and even then, it still may not be necessary.

Animation

A rendered scene can be impressive, but images really start to come alive when they are animated. A moving scene has real depth, with objects in the foreground moving faster than objects in the background.

Most rendering packages are designed to deal with animations. They allow objects to be



▲ The image on the left has been scanline rendered, the image on the right has been ray traced. Can you spot the difference?

Desirable Hardware

If you are serious about image rendering, you'll need to splash out on a little, or maybe a lot of extra hardware. The complexity of the rendering process means that a fast processor is essential, so aim for a fast 68030 or better. A maths-compressor (FPU) will make a large difference, because all rendering programs will detect and make use of the faster maths abilities.

Memory is important too, especially if you are dealing with complicated models, lots of textures or high-resolution images. As much as possible is the general rule, but try for at least 8Mb. If you are interested in creating animations, the more memory you have the better: more ram means longer and smoother playback.

A hard drive is so useful I shouldn't have to even mention it. Having to load and save objects and images to and from floppy is such a tedious business it can quickly drain you of any creativity. Put it high on your list.



▲ Imagine: one of the first rendering programs on the Amiga. You just can't beat it. The illustration shown here is a good example of the moody types of effects you can achieve with this package.

'key framed': for example, in frame one a car may be on the left of the screen. In frame 100 it may be on the right. The in-between frames are calculated by the rendering software.

There's a lot more to it than that of course. Cameras and light sources can move too: your camera can fly through a cityscape for example, whilst the sun rises and sets. Or the objects themselves can change over time: altering their shape, colour and textures.

The best rendering packages allow objects to move in realistic ways by allowing them to be linked in a hierarchy: for example, given a human hand object constructed from a disk and five cylinders, it should be possible to move the hand in one go rather than having to move all the parts individually.

What's on offer?

There are still a reasonable number of image rendering packages available for the Amiga and most are still in development. Some have been with the Amiga for as long as it has existed, others are relatively new. All of them are capable of creating excellent images however.

Imagine

Imagine is one of the original image rendering programs on the Amiga, having been called 'Turbo Silver' in its previous lives. It's currently in release 4.5 (the .5 was merited by the addition of ARexx and CyberGraphics support).

Imagine is an excellent package, although it can seem more than a little complicated to beginners. Once you get the hang of its multiple editor screen approach though, it becomes reasonably easy to use. Imagine's vast library of special textures are nothing short of fantastic. If there was one problem with Imagine, it would be its non-standard Amiga interface. It doesn't look or act at all like an Amiga program: in fact, the PC version is identical in all respects.

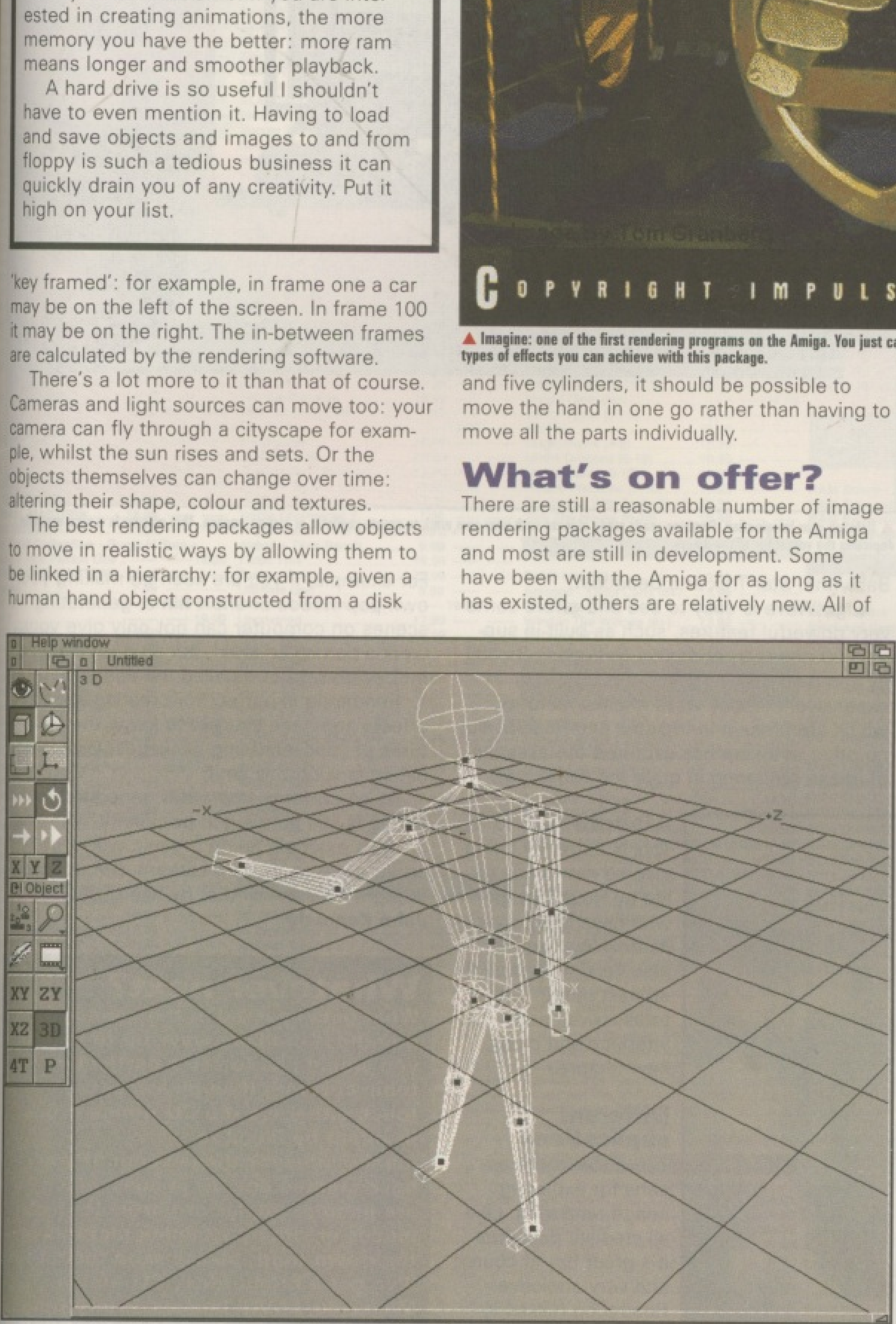
Cinema4D

Cinema4D is the most recent package and it's being distributed by HiSoft in the UK. Its user interface is very modern and a complete contrast from Imagine. Like Imagine though, objects are built up using tiny surfaces called 'facets'. This makes it possible to create extremely accurate copies of real objects, although it can take quite a while. Cinema4D has a very easy to use inverse kinematics system which makes it easy to animate complicate objects, such as human figures. There are other nice touches, such as the fractal object animator which makes it a five second job to manufacture complicated landscapes.

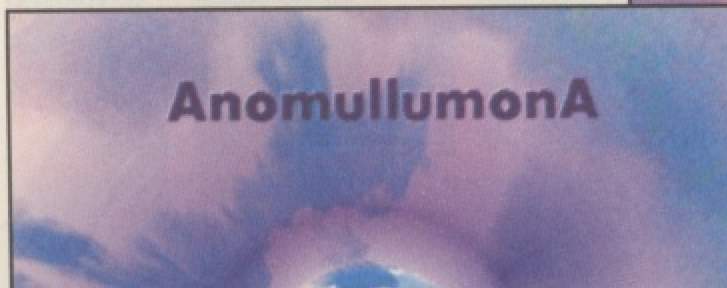
Real3D

Real3D works in a different way from other packages in that objects are constructed

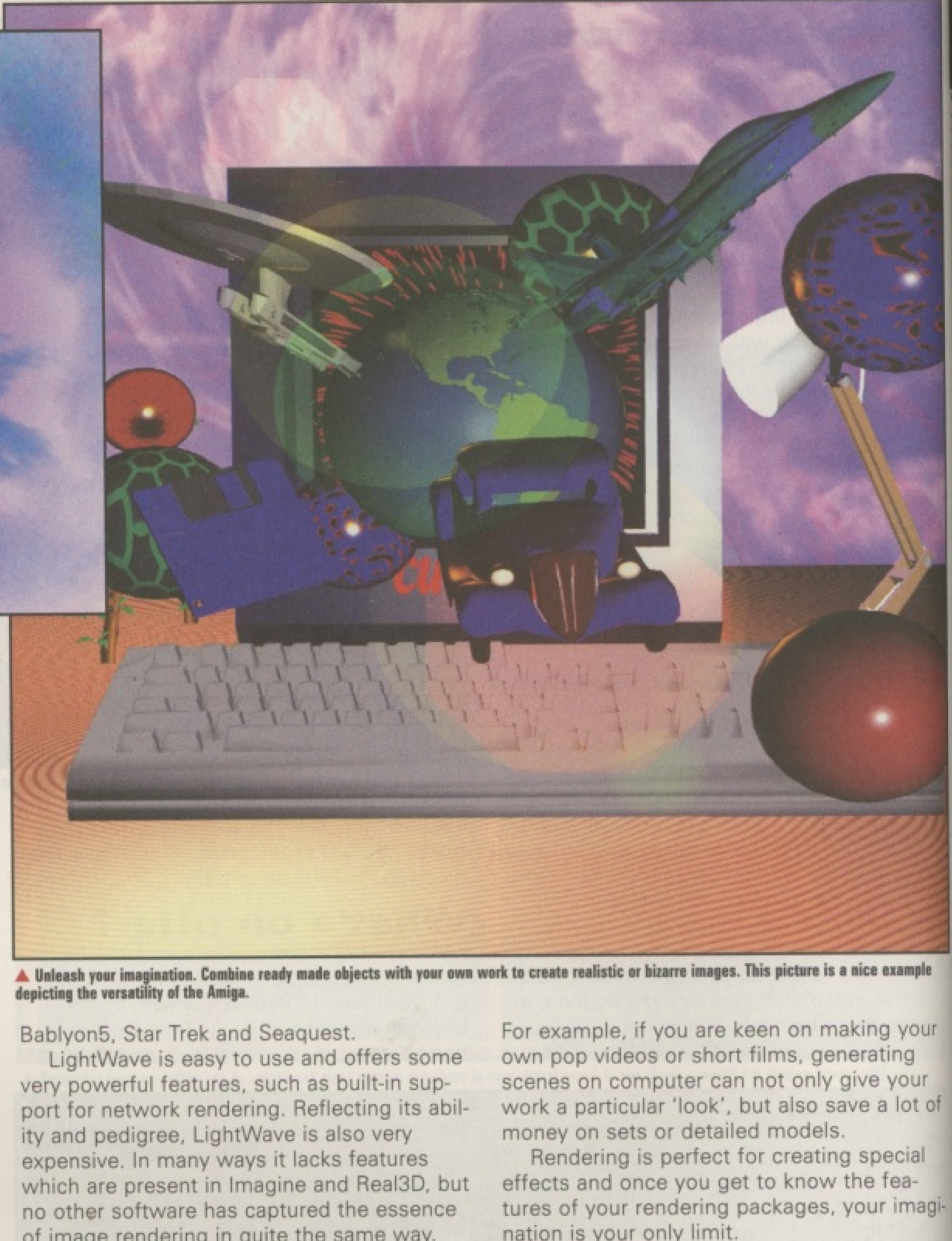
Continued overleaf ▶▶▶



▲ Using the best rendering packages you can get objects to move in a totally realistic way. Here I'm about to make my man-like figure strut his stuff with the best of them.



▲ **Render your own album cover. A 3D package makes it possible to get results which can not be achieved with traditional paint programs.**



▲ **Unleash your imagination. Combine ready made objects with your own work to create realistic or bizarre images. This picture is a nice example depicting the versatility of the Amiga.**

from primitive objects which can be manipulated in many different ways. It can be easier for the beginner, because it's a lot like making models from clay or modelling bricks.

The hierarchical structure used by Real3D is also superb, as every object can be easily planned and constructed from smaller parts. However, the most amazing feature is the ability of Real3D to deal with objects as though they were real: objects can have 'mass' and when 'pushed' they react realistically. This makes animation easy, for example a pile of bricks will collapse in a very convincing way.

LightWave

LightWave is the tool of the professional and it really put the Amiga on the rendering map. Originally part of the VideoToaster bundle, LightWave is currently a stand-alone product and is at release four on the Amiga. Although it might appear a pretty ordinary package, the images it produces are incredibly smart: good enough to be used in Bablyon5, Star Trek and Seaquest.

LightWave is easy to use and offers some very powerful features, such as built-in support for network rendering. Reflecting its ability and pedigree, LightWave is also very expensive. In many ways it lacks features which are present in Imagine and Real3D, but no other software has captured the essence of image rendering in quite the same way.



▲ **With all the Amiga 3D rendering packages, you can output images in 24-bit format: that means over 16 million colours and lots of detail and you can still load then into a package like Photogenics for more processing.**

Aladdin 4D

This is currently being given a new lease of life by Nova Design who have taken over its development. A new version is expected next month with a totally revamped interface and many new features.

Different applications

There are many reasons for exploring image rendering. Like all creative pastimes it's great fun of course and very addictive. Rendering makes it possible to create amazing animations. For example, if you are keen on making your own pop videos or short films, generating scenes on computer can not only give your work a particular 'look', but also save a lot of money on sets or detailed models.

Rendering is perfect for creating special effects and once you get to know the features of your rendering packages, your imagination is your only limit.

As an art form, computer generated rendering is still growing in popularity, with one obvious example being organic works of artists such as William Latham. (What, you thought he drew all that by hand?) ■

John Kennedy

Whatever next?

What gets covered in the coming months is in many ways up to you! If you would like to see a particular topic covered, then please get in touch either c/o the CU Amiga office or direct by Email to johnk@infosys2.thegap.com. If you have created any 3D images which are good examples or particular techniques or simply stunning pictures in their own right, please send them to 'I've got a bright idea', CU Amiga Magazine, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, so we can include them.

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OTHER SERVICES INCLUDE FLATBED SCANNING, DIGITISING, SOUND SAMPLING, MEMBERSHIP, PD SWAPS, FOREIGN PD AVAILABLE IN LARGE NUMBERS, BRAND NEW AND DIRECT FROM THE AUTHORS! OUR MEMBERSHIP FOR ONE YEARS CATDISK UPDATE (24 DISKS!) IS ONLY £6.00, GET THE LATEST PD AVAILABLE WITHIN MINUTES OF IT BEING RELEASED, AND OUR FAB DISKS FOR A YEAR WITHOUT BOTHERING TO ASK FOR IT EACH MONTH. PLATINUM MEMBERSHIP IS 15.00, AND ENTITLES YOU TO 10% OFF PD, A YEAR'S CATDISKS AS THEY'RE RELEASED, 30% OFF SCANNING, 30% OFF BLANKS AS PD, 25% OFF DIGITISING, 30% OFF SAMPLING, ETC, ETC!
CATCH IT WHILE ITS HOT!

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL MIGHT BE ANOTHER TRAIN......

WELL, GOOD LORD MISS, WHAT BIG.....EYES .... YOU HAVE..MY, HOW TIME FLIES, HOW GRASS GROWS AND HOW TOWERS, ERM TOWER. YES . ANOTHER NON-SENSICAL ADVERT FROM YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD PD COMPANY OF 1996, BASICALLY, WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO SAY, IN A ROUNDABOUT KINDA FASHION, IS HELLO. LET'S JUST GET THE BRAGGING OUT OF THE WAY, WE ARE OFFICIALLY: **I A T PD COMPANY OF THE YEAR**

AND NO, IT WASN'T FIXED. WELL, HOW ON THIS GREEN, ROUND SPHERE WE CALL EARTH DID WE GET THIS AWARD? WELL, THIS IS WHY V12 GOT THE GOLD:
* THE LOWEST PRICES IN THIS MAGAZINE BY A VERY LONG WAY, DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT, LOOK AROUND, EVEN THE TINY ADS AT AT THE BACK AREN'T CHEAPER * 24 HOUR TURNAROUND. WITH OUR TURBO POWERED PD WE ALWAYS OUTSTRIP THE COMPETITION FOR SPEED. WE'RE NOT CALLED V12 FOR NOTHING! * THE LARGEST SELECTION OF HIGH QUALITY PD ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. OVER 15,000 TITLES AND ALL AT 50p EACH! IF YOU WANT IT, CHANCES ARE WE ALREADY HAVE IT AND 3 DIFFERENT PROGRAMS LIKE IT TOO! * UNDENIABLY THE BEST CATDISK IN THE WORLD. THERE QUITE SIMPLY ISN'T A CATDISK THAT HAS HAD SO MUCH TIME SPENT ON IT. SORRY BUT PERFECTION WAS DEMANDED IN A CATDISK AND WE BELIEVE WE'VE GOT AS CLOSE AS IT 'S POSSIBLE TO DO WITHOUT LOOKING INHUMANLY SMUG ALL YOUR LIFE . AND IT' S FREE. SO GET ONE MISTER. * MORE WORLDWIDE SWAPPING CONTACTS THAN YOU COULD IMAGINE, PD COMES IN FROM ALL OVER THE AMIGA WORLD. THIS MEANS MORE EXCLUSIVE PD THAN YOU'VE EVER SEEN ! AND ALL AT 50p EH, I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW IT'S DONE... * FRIENDLIER SERVICE THAN YOU COULD EVER DARE TO EXPECT - NO QUIBBLES RETURN POLICY GUARANTEED,

AND THAT'S A PROMISE. SO, WE KEEP BLITHERING ON ABOUT HOW CHEAP WE ARE, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA HAVE TO DO TO FIND OUT OUR PRICES, SLAP US AROUND, TWEAK OUR TOES, MAKE US EAT COLD PORRIDGE ALL DAY, WELL , NO ACTUALLY, COS DARLIN' LITTLE PRICES FOR V12 ARE :

**1-5 DISKS = 65P EACH
6-9 DISKS = 60P EACH
10+ DISKS = 50p EACH
20+ DISKS + 10 FREE = 10.00 INC P+P
P+P IS ONLY 50P ON ANY SIZE ORDER!
DISKS ARE 25P EACH INCLUDING P+P IF YOU SUPPLY THE BLANKS!
CASH, CHEQUES AND P.O.'S ACCEPTED. MAKE PAYABLE TO V12-PD**

SO, OF COURSE, WITH THE AMIGA MARKET IN A BIT OF A CLOUD EVERYONE NEEDS NEW SOFTWARE IN ABUNDANCE. WELL, WE CAN SUPPLY IT. NO ONE BEATS OUR PRICES, TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT, NO ONE IS IN THE SAME BALL PARK AS US. WE HAVE THE LARGEST AMIGA PD CATALOGUE IN THE WORLD, OVER 10 GIG'S OF PD MATERIAL, THAT'S NEARLY TWICE AS MUCH AS THE ENTIRE AMINET SERVICE, SO WHY BOTHER BUYING A MODEM? WE CAN GET THE PD TO YOU FAR MORE CHEAPLY THAN ANY ONLINE SERVICE AROUND AT AT THE MOMENT.

4 HOUR TURNAROUND IS NO PROBLEM, IN FACT IT IS GUARANTEED ON ALL NORMAL ORDERS. 1.3 SUPPORT? THOUSANDS OF DISKS FOR A500'S ETC. AGA SUPPORT? EVERY AGA TITLE YOU CAN IMAGINE, AND THEN SOME! WE HAVE EVERYTHING FROM EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE FOR TODDLERS TO GLAMOUR ENTERTAINMENT FOR ADULTS , THOUSANDS OF GAMES FOR ALL AGES, UTILS IN THEIR TENS OF THOUSANDS, MUSIC, ART, ANIMATIONS, OH BROTHER, ALL I CAN SAY IS, IF YOU NAME A SUBJECT AND WE DROPPED ALL THE DISKS WE HAD ONTO YOUR BONCE , YOU WOULDN'T ASK US AGAIN. BUT YOUR SOLICITOR MIGHT......

AND OF COURSE THE FIRST STEP INTO V1 PALACE (TAKE THE 1TH TURN OFF FROM THE M180) IS THE CATDISKS. WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM A CATDISK, COS IT'S LIKELY WE WILL HAVE INCORPORATED IT INTO THIS BALLISTIC LITTLE DOUBLE BARRELLED BABY! OVER 45,000 LINES OF TEXT, IT WILL AUTOMATICALLY DETECT WHAT MODEL OF AMIGA IT IS IN AND CHANGE AS IT BOOTS TO USE THE SYSTEM TO BEST EFFECT, HAVE A HD AND WANT TO INSTALL BOTH DISKS TO IT? NO PROBLEM, IT'S ONLY ONE MOUSE CLICK AWAY, AS WELL AS ANOTHER ICON TO REMOVE IT ALL TOO! DON'T HAVE A HD BUT WANT TO INSTALL IT TO RAM INSTEAD? NO PROBLEM EITHER, OPTIONAL RAM INSTALLATION FOR OVER 1500% SPEED INCREASE, AND ALL IN 1.5 MEG OF RAM (CHIP OR FAST) ! HAVE THE STANDARD 1 MEG AND WANT TO RUN IT COMBINED FROM RAM AND FLOPPY? NO PROBLEM EITHER !! IT WILL INSTALL CERTAIN REGULARLY USED PARTS OF THE CAT FOR A 100% INCREASE IN SPEED! A MOUSE DRIVEN INTERFACE, ANIMATIONS, MUSIC, PICS STILL HIRES LACED GRAPHICS (EVEN ON AN A500 !) AND THE HUMOUROUS LISTINGS THAT WE ARE WELL KNOWN FOR. OH GO ON, SEND FOR IT. IT'S GOT GAMES TOO NOW!!!!!

FOR A CATDISK RING THE NUMBER ABOVE, OR WRITE AND ASK. IT'S FREE THIS MONTH SO GET IT AND START SEEING HOW A PD COMPANY SHOULD BE! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO LOSE? WE DON'T BITE YOU KNOW. WHEN YOU'RE LOOKING ....

WELL, ANOTHER MONTH, ANOTHER VERY BADLY RUSHED TOGETHER ADVERT...... NOTHING CHANGES. JUST THINK I'LL LEAVE YOU WITH A SMALL QUOTE FROM THE V1 BOOK OF WISDOM (AVAILABLE AT ALL SECOND RATE BOOK SHOPS), WHICH IS :

WIN IF YOU CAN, LOSE IF YOU MUST , BUT ALWAYS CHEAT.

GREETS THIS MONTH GO OUT TO WOLFMAN, TOPDOG, FREAK AND BUDDA OF NFA, ICEMAN OF CARNAGE, ICON OF LSD, MR SPOON, MICHAEL CARTER, JOHNNY 5, STEFAN MANSIER, THE BEYOND THE FRONTIER CREW (HI), ROB DAVAIU, RIGSBY, GUNTERHEIM SUPPLIES, MADONNA, KYLIE, DANNI, BONJOVI, KISS, ANDY GIBSON (DMC DESERVES 99%), TROUSERS MC, BERNIE, JACOB GRIZZLY, BENTLEY BELISHA AND FRILLY MIDGE, AND ALL THOSE PEOPLE WE'VE TYPICALLY FORGOTTEN.

FLATBED SCANNING SERVICES

FLATBED SCANNING IS NOW AVAILABLE TO A PROFESSIONAL STANDARD, WITH DPI UPTO 2400 X 2400 DPI, EVERY FILE FORMAT FROM ILBM TO JPEG, AND EVERY RESOLUTION FROM LORES-NTSC TO SUPERHIRES-FULL OVERSCAN PAL AND CUSTOM RESOLUTIONS BEYOND THAT. WE OFFER THIS SERVICE OUT TO ANY PD COMPANY, OR ANY AMIGA BASED COMPANY AT DISCOUNT TRADE PRICES, AND ALSO TO ANY AMIGA OWNING INDIVIDUAL AT THE VERY LOW PRICES, RING US FOR DETAILS, WE ARE AT LEAST 3 TIMES CHEAPER THAN DEDICATED SCANNING BUREAUS. ANY AMIGA COMPANY WHO WISHES TO OFFER OUR SERVICE CAN ARRANGE AN AGREEMENT WITH US FOR SOME SERIOUS DISCOUNTS, SO MAKE THOSE SCANNING DREAMS COME TRUE! REMEMBER ALSO, OUR DIGITISING SERVICE, WHEN ALLIED WITH SCANNING, CAN OFFER COMPUTER REPRESENTATION OF ANY OBJECT, ANY PICTURE UP TO ABOUT 4 SQUARE METERS(!) WITH NO LOSS OF QUALITY. PLEASE RING FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

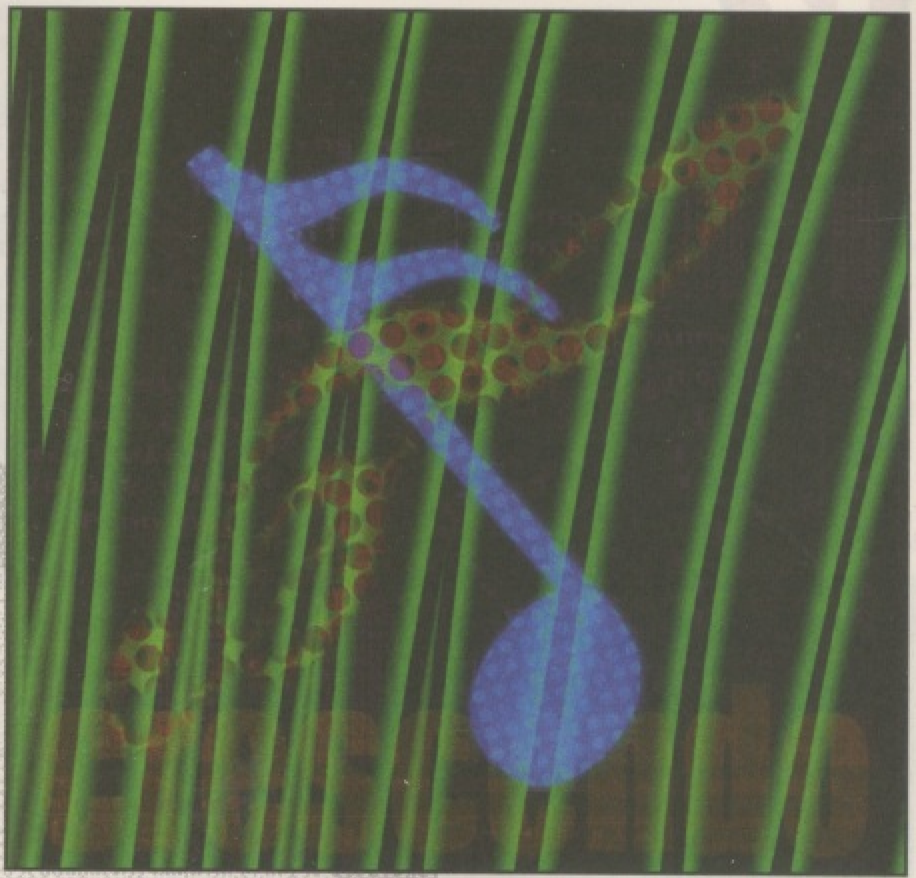
We stock all the collections including Assassin's 1-250, Fred Fish 1-1000, Scope 1-220, Amigan, Arug, New Zealand, Imagine Object collection, Clipart collection, Barbie, Amos, Legal Tools 1-149 and thousands more. we now also sell CD's cheaper than everyone else, every Amiga CD available is, erm, available from us!

15,000+ titles, that's more than a library with less than that!

Sound Lab

Crescendo and build up techniques

Is your music sounding a bit lifeless and limp? Try breathing some life back into it with some thumping, adrenalin-rushing build ups.



You can't beat a good crescendo. Whatever style of music you're making, if you want to get the blood boiling and bang up the excitement level then a powerful build up is winner every time. In fact it's a technique that's been used as far back as the original classical composers, and even dating back to the most primitive tribal rituals. But good music never dies, it just comes back with a different width of trouser leg and new hairstyle, proof of which is the presence of crescendos in just about all forms of modern music, even if they're more popular in some styles than others.

So how do they work? Basically the idea is that the music builds up from something fairly minimal to a feverish state of excitement. Once it reaches its peak, it might then drop right back down to basics again, sustain the intensity, kick in with some bass or a riff, or shoot off in a completely different direction. There's no single formula for creating a crescendo but there are a few techniques that can be easily adapted to suit your requirements. Let's take a look some of them.

Techniques

Snare rolls. We'll get this one out of the way first. The biggest cliché in house and techno over the last year or two has been the long snare drum roll that fades up over 8, 16 or 32 bars, with snare drums placed on every quarter beat. It works in a club but frankly it's been done to death and if individuality means anything to you, you'll want to steer clear of this. That's not to say you can't use drums for the job. Gradually layering up rhythm tracks is a good way to hype things up.

Crank it up

Increasing intensity. This is open to your own interpretation and ideas and can take on a range of forms. If you're fortunate enough to have an outboard synth you can alter the parameters of a sound using sliders and knobs or with MIDI control data from your sequencer. Cranking up the level of certain effects works well (distortion or echoes for example) and if you've got an analogue synth you can push the resonance control to max, then increase the filter cut-off from minimum to maximum. That works well on chord sequences as well as the more obvious acid riffs. If you're really lucky and have the facility to pass an audio signal through an analogue filter you can come up with all kinds of weird variations on this idea. Try it with vocals, drums, even the entire mix.

Introducing elements. If you choose your sounds well, so that they all have their own space in the overall mix, you can go on introducing new sounds every few bars for quite a while before it gets clogged up. One of the best ways to do this is to start off with a good minimal section that's maybe a bit strange, or particularly catchy or funky. If this part is good enough, everything else that's dropped over the top should sound like a bonus and take the track to another level.

Trade secrets

It's worth bearing in mind that if you want to build to a crescendo, then bang in with an addition part, you'll need to leave a suitable gap in the audio spectrum during the build-up. If the build up is more intense than what follows, you risk spoiling the whole effect with an anticlimax. The trick is to make the audience think the track has got as intense, loud and climactic as possible, then blow their heads off with a new element, such as the bass for example. On the other hand, you can be a bit more devious with your use of a build-up, using it as a turning point to skew your track off in a different direction, which can be even more dramatic than crashing in with a killer riff. If it's done well, it's a bit like having a bucket of cold water thrown in your face, sort of.

There are all kinds of tricks you can use. It's worth checking out some masters of the art for inspiration. Jean Michel Jarre has a few good examples on his live Rendezvous Houston album, Brian Transeau and the rest of the 'epic house' brigade do a nice line in extremely long sweeping builds, Spicelab's recent 'Feathers' single is a top example of subtle builds and off-shoots, and check out any of Hardfloor's self-parodying remixes for the more conventional acid build ups. ■

Tony Horgan

Bangin' mate, nice one!

The world of techno has spawned many classic and highly influential records which have used the crescendo to create stunning effects. Underworld's 'Rez' is a brilliant example of a long relentless build up, while Jam and Spoon's main remix of Age of Love's self-titled track pioneered the raw resonant filter crescendo. Check Size 9's "I am Ready" for the original over the top snare roll and the too-classic-for-words 'Acperience 1' by Hardfloor for the acid drop-out and build up blueprint now used by so many others.

Wired World

PART 17

Getting down to the nitty gritty, here's how you can find out all those little extra details about who you are talking to on the Net.



It's one thing providing material for everyone to look at on the Web, but it's quite another if you'd like to learn anything about the people who are viewing the fruits of your work. What we need is a way for people to be able to enter details, make selections and such forth and then be able to send it to us. Normally this is impossible for dial-up Internet users but with a few tricks we can bend HTML 'Forms' to make it happen for us.

So what exactly are Forms and how do we get the data? If you've been on the Web you won't have missed them – they are those gadgets, buttons and text boxes which require data to be entered into them. There's usually a 'submit' button at the bottom which when pressed sends the data off instantly. The Web site then can act upon that data instantly. However, since dial-up accounts users don't usually have access to special 'CGI' binaries which normally process the data, we need another trick to process the information.

For the purpose of this tutorial we'll be using a special type of Form which will actually Email the data to your account since every dial-up user has this function. Unfortunately, this means we must rely on the Amiga browsers having their 'mailto:' function properly configured. With Voyager and AWeb this relies on scripts which activate external programs. IBrowse has it built in. For this reason, some kind of warning note above the Forms would be a good idea.

Complex beasts

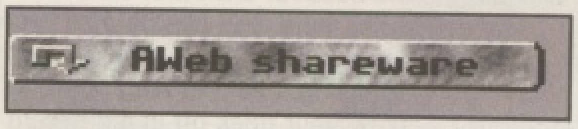
Forms are quite complex beasts but are certainly worthwhile adding to your HTML skills. In simple terms, a Form must start off with a <FORM> tag. It must then be followed by a METHOD and ACTION attribute. The kind of <FORM> we need would be as follows;

OU-EE-GUI

Now let's get onto the real meat of the matter. Here's the different GUI elements of Forms listed with examples;

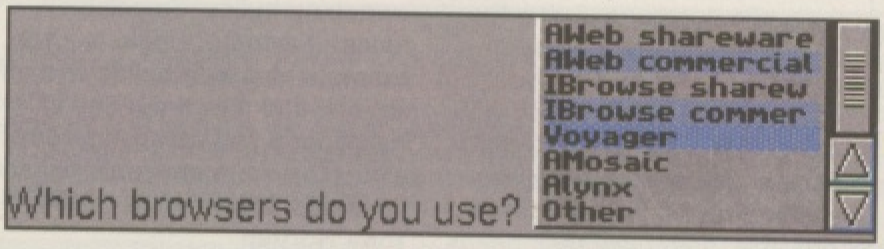
SELECT:

The first real GUI function. Normally this creates a pop-down lister but it's also a cycle gadget. You specify the choices and the user must pick one of them. For this reason, it needs some nested code within the select statement, easiest explained with an example;

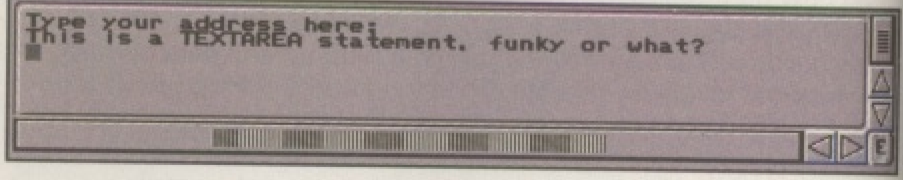



```
<SELECT NAME="browser">
 <OPTION VALUE="aweb">AWeb shareware
 <OPTION SELECTED VALUE="aweb2">AWeb 2.x commercial
 <OPTION VALUE="ibs">IBrowse shareware
 <OPTION VALUE="ib1">IBrowse 1.x commercial
 <OPTION VALUE="v">Voyager 1.0
 <OPTION VALUE="other">Other browser
</SELECT>
```

Here the data item will be named 'browser' and the user will be able to pick from any of the browsers listed above. When one of them is selected, the data item 'browser' will be filled with the value specified with the value attribute, rather than the full name. We've specified SELECTED on the AWeb 2.x item which means that the cycle gadget/pop-down lister will default to that setting.



<SELECT> also sports a special attribute called 'MULTIPLE' and if this is enabled, instead of a pop-down lister/cycle gadget, a lister appears with all the selections and they may be multi-selected in the browser. The lister will be equipped with scroll gadgets but you may set the size with a SIZE attribute. IE <SELECT NAME="browser" MULTIPLE SIZE=10>



TEXTAREA:

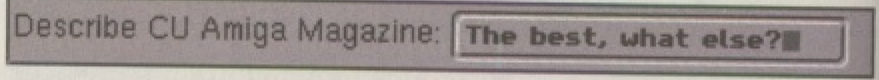
The TEXTAREA type creates a mini text editor window on the browser. As usual it needs a NAME field but also needs to be told the number of ROWS and COLS for the rows and columns. Text can usually be typed beyond these limits as the editor should scroll. For example;

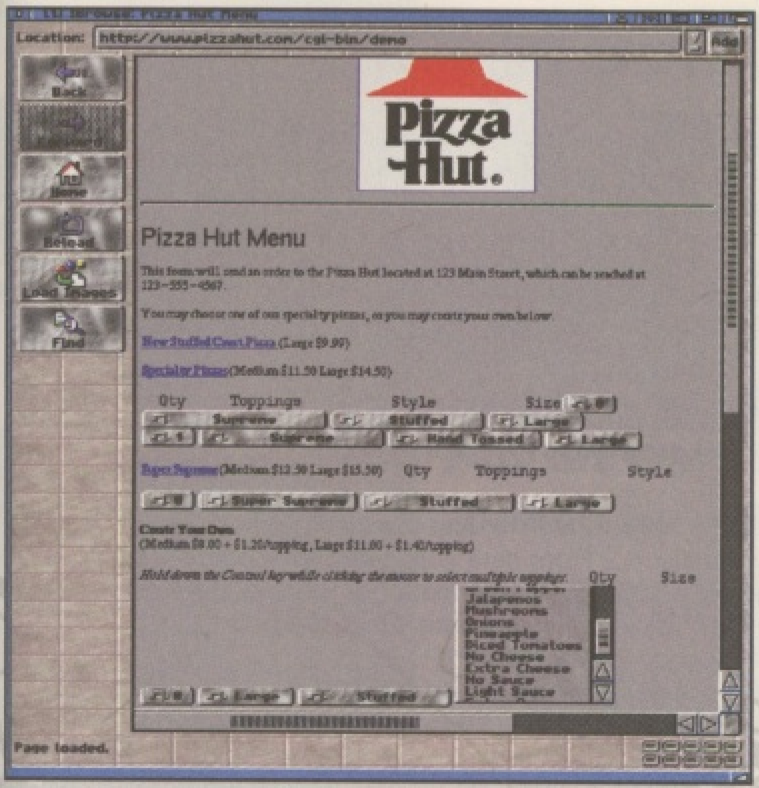
```
<TEXTAREA NAME="address" ROWS=6 COLS=64>
  Type your address here;
</TEXTAREA>
```

Next, TYPEs of <INPUT> tags. All of these functions are accessed by specifying a TYPE within <INPUT> like <INPUT TYPE=xxx>, The following are a list of handy functions that you can use for your Forms;

TEXT:

The obvious Form element is a text box which needs filling out with data. This is also the default so if you don't specify the TYPE, a TEXT type is assumed. There are three attributes and they are,





▲ Yum. Ordering a pizza over the Net is nice.

```
<FORM METHOD="POST" ACTION="mail-
to:joe@thenet.co.uk">
```

This tag will mail the data to joe@thenet.co.uk, (obviously insert your own Email address here). If you're the lucky owner of an SMTP mail type account then you could dedicate a unique Email box for Form data. Otherwise just use your standard Email address.

We need to follow this line with the Form code itself. This is made up from <INPUT> tags which ask for certain types of information and name them. The named data is then Emailed when the Form is submitted. First, we need a special <INPUT> tag to identify the Form when we use an Arexx script afterwards to make the results readable;

```
<INPUT TYPE=HIDDEN →
NAME="formid"→
VALUE="first">
```

GUI devices

The above<INPUT> tag shows the three attributes normally used for each input gadget. First there is the type of GUI device we're using, next the name of the data item and thirdly the default value of the data item. In this case the browsers will not display or ask for information since the type is 'hidden'. The reason for this is that we are specifying a data item 'formid' and making it equal to the name of our form. The name doesn't matter but you must make it unique to each of the forms you create.

Now let's look at a real live example and what it will do; **(→ means don't hit return.)**

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>Wired World Example
Form</TITLE>
</HEAD>
<BODY>
<H1>Sample Questionnaire</H1>
Please fill out this
questionnaire:<BR>
<FORM METHOD="POST" →
ACTION="mailto:joe@thenet.co.uk">
<INPUT TYPE=HIDDEN NAME="formid"→
VALUE="first">
<BR><BR>
Your name: <INPUT NAME="name"→
size="48"><BR>
Male <INPUT NAME="gender"→
TYPE=RADIO VALUE="male"><BR>
Female <INPUT NAME="gender"→
TYPE=RADIO VALUE="female"><BR>
Number in family:
<INPUT NAME="family" TYPE=text><BR>
Cities in which you maintain a
residence:<BR>
<UL>
<LI>London <INPUT NAME="city"→
TYPE=checkbox VALUE="London">
<LI>Manchester <INPUT NAME="city"→
TYPE=checkbox VALUE="Miami">
```

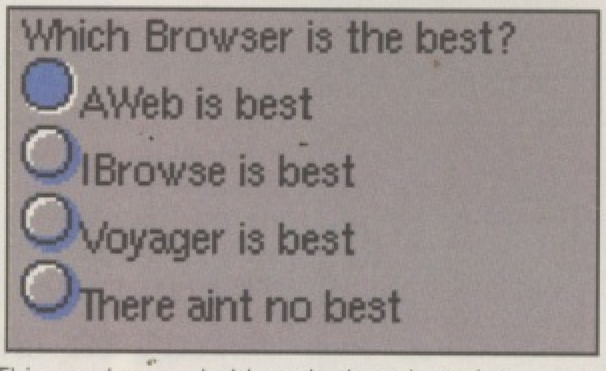
Continued overleaf ▶ ▶ ▶

MAXLENGTH which specifies the maximum amount of characters the user can type, SIZE which sets the size in characters of the text box (defaults to MAXLENGTH) and VALUE which is the initial value. An example would be;

```
<INPUT NAME="uname" MAXLENGTH=10>
```

HIDDEN:

With TYPE=HIDDEN, the user doesn't interact, instead the VALUE attribute specifies the value of the data item of name NAME. An example is given earlier, this is necessary at the start of each of our forms if the ARexx script, looked at later, will be able to identify the data out of your Email box.



RADIO:

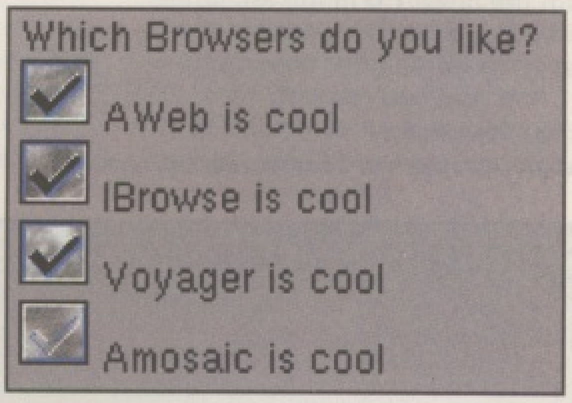
Radio gadgets are simple on/off buttons. This can be used either singly or by using multiple statements with the same NAME. This will mean only ONE of the options can be picked. Example;

```
<P>Which Browser is the best?
<INPUT TYPE=RADIO NAME=browser CHECKED
VALUE="Aweb">AWeb is best<br>  <INPUT TYPE=RADIO
NAME=browser VALUE="IBrowse">IBrowse is best<br>
```

Note here that in this example there will be two buttons (ie you choose between Aweb or Ibrowse) but you may only click on AWeb or IBrowse. Depending which is selected, the appropriate VALUE will then be sent. You can specify which is the default with an additional CHECKED attribute.

CHECKBOX:

Same as the above except that you may select any, all or none of the settings.



RESET:

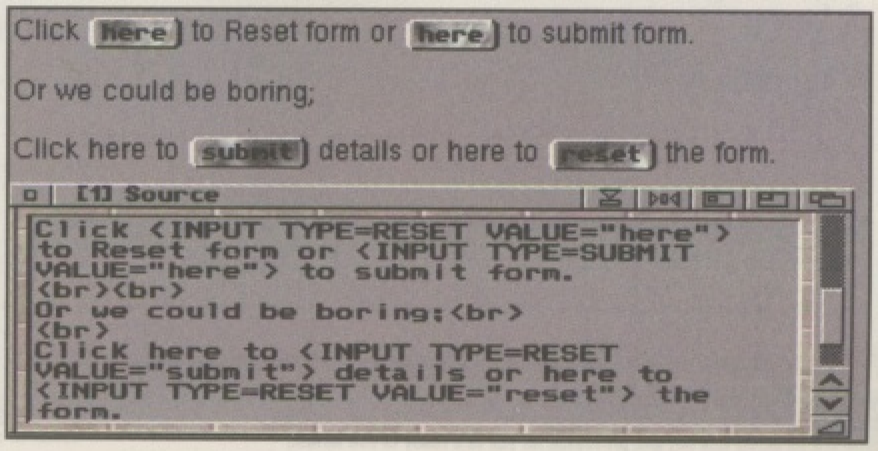
This is a special TYPE which returns/resets all of the Form to it's initial default state. This time VALUE sets the label of the button rather than a value. You could use it like this;

```
<INPUT TYPE=RESET VALUE="Clear Form">
```

SUBMIT:

Finally, you'll need a button to press which will send the contents of the Form, specifically to Email it in this case. Again VALUE sets the label of the button like;

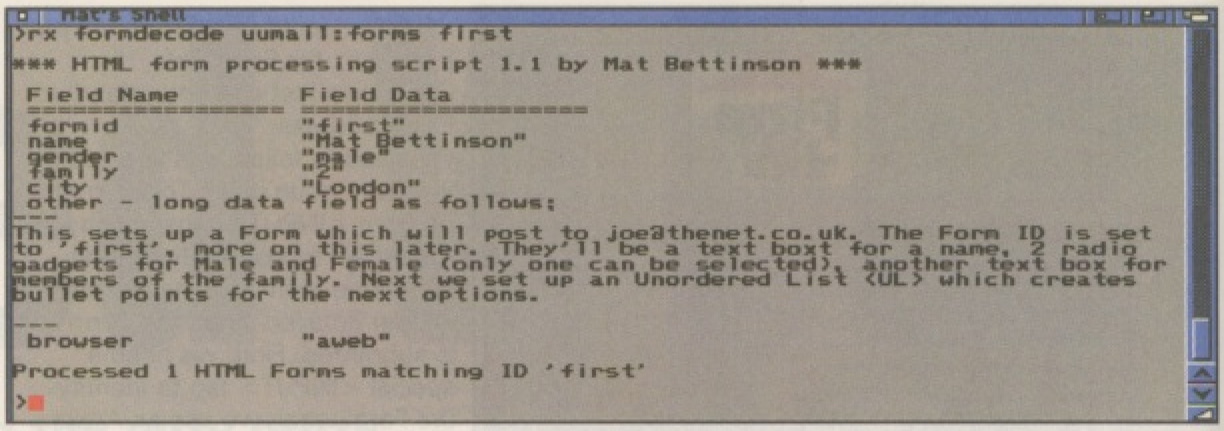
```
<INPUT TYPE=SUBMIT VALUE="Send Fqrm">
```



```
<LI>Other <TEXTAREA NAME="other"→
COLS=48 ROWS=4></TEXTAREA> </UL>
Which browser do you prefer?
<SELECT NAME="browser">
 <OPTION value="aweb">AWeb
 <OPTION value="aweb">IBrowse
 <OPTION value="v">Voyager
 <OPTION value="other">Other
</SELECT>
Thank you for responding to this
questionnaire.<BR>
<INPUT TYPE=SUBMIT VALUE="Send →
Form">
<INPUT TYPE=RESET VALUE="Clear →
form">
</FORM>
</BODY>
</HTML>
```

This listing sets up a Form which will post information to joe@thenet.co.uk (fill in your address here, of course). The Form ID is set to 'first', (we'll cover this later). There'll be a text box for a name, two radio gadgets for Male and Female (only one can be selected), another text box for members of the family. After that there'll be an Unordered List <UL> which will create bullet points for the next options such as checkboxes for which city you live in. The third option is 'other' which will sport a text box of 48 x 4 characters in size. Finally, we'll round up with a browser cycle gadget/pull-down menu and two buttons, one for clearing the form and one for sending it. Try out this example or get it from the cover CD in the Magazine/WiredWorld directory where you can locate it at

http://www.cu-amiga.co.uk/ww/formexample.html



▲ Here's our form, where we can find out details such as where you live, what sex you are, what shoe size...

Making it readable

Unfortunately, when the mailto: Form data is sent to your Email address it will make no sense at all. It will appear something like this: the form name1=data1&name2=data2... and so on across a single line. Spaces will be converted to '+' signs and all other characters will be converted to % codes representing the ASCII code in hex. Not something you can read easily.

However, with the aid of a Arexx script, the text can be converted to a more readable form. We've provided the script on this month's cover disk in the Wired World directory and on the CD in the Magazine/WiredWorld directory. Called FormDecode.rexx, naturally it assumes that RexxMast is running and it's executed from the AmigaDOS shell. To begin copy the FormDecode.rexx script into your rexx: assign and adhere to the following.

Saving out Email

First, what you need to do is to save out all of the text related to the forms. You may have it separate anyway if you're using an SMTP account. Otherwise, simply mark all of your Email (or just the messages you know to be Form data posts) and save out as a text file. It's then a matter of running the ARexx script on the resulting text as follows;

```
rx FormDecode <Name of Text File>
<Form ID or ALL> [QUIET]
```

The first argument will be the full pathname to the text file previously saved out. The Form ID should match the Form ID created with the very first <INPUT TYPE=HIDDEN NAME="formid" VALUE="xxx"> line where the Form ID should match 'xxx' here. This allows you to only view data matching a particular form. You can also specify ALL here if you'd like to view all of the Form data as you can tell which relates to what, as seen later.

QUIET switch

Finally there's a QUIET switch which is optional. Insert this at the end and the script will print out less formatting and statistics. This is useful if you want to redirect the text to a file and don't want the extras. Here's a couple of examples;

```
rx FormDecode ram:EMail.txt ALL

rx FormDecode ram:Email.txt first
QUIET >ram:Results.txt
```

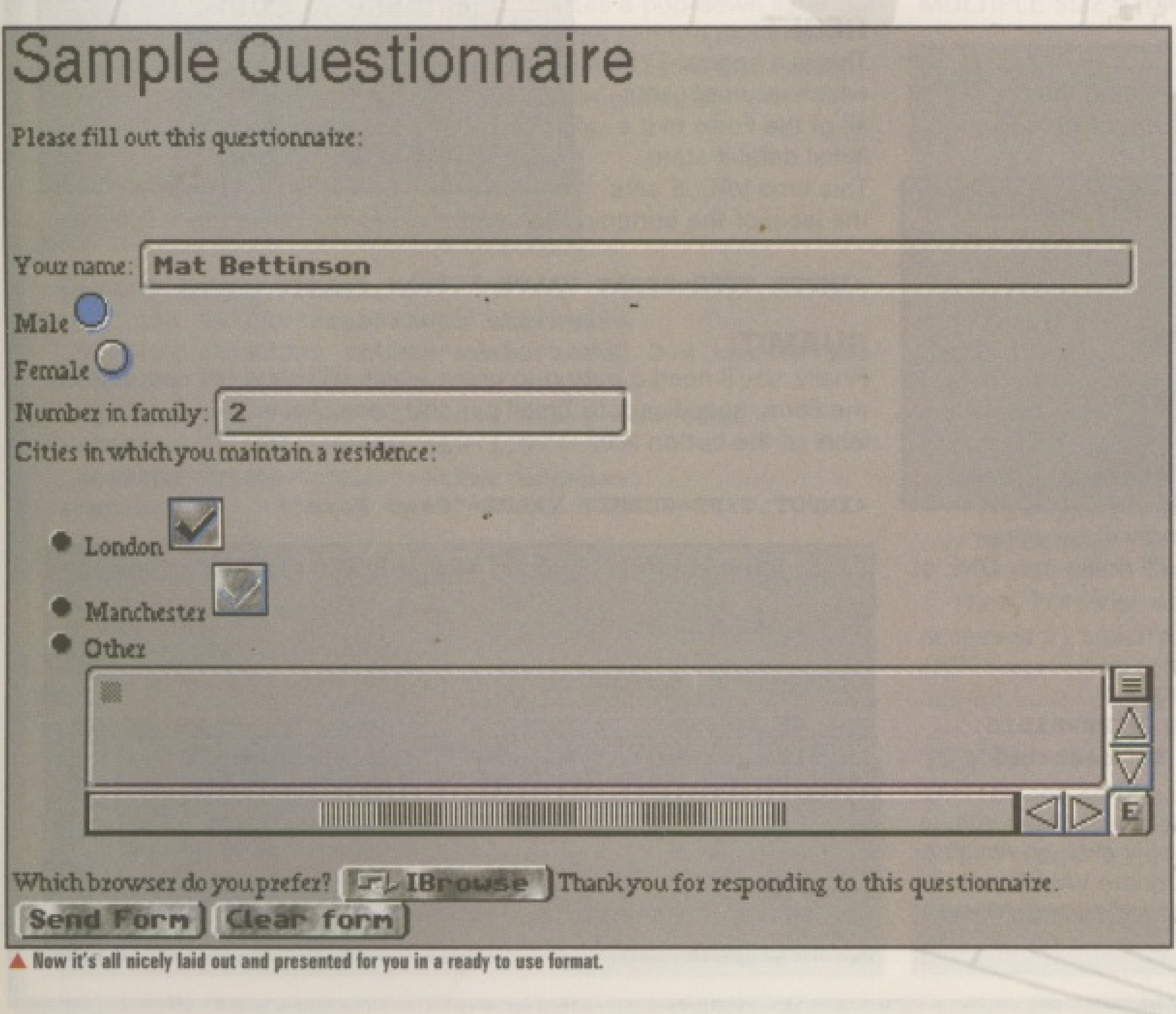
The first example will scan the text file ram:EMail.txt and print all found Form data to the shell. The second will scan the text file for the specific questionnaire Form example provided earlier, print nothing but the data and output to a text file in ram:Results.txt. Just the business for perhaps another script to compile statistics? Which is beyond this tutorial, but a little Arexx can go a long long way.

What to do with it

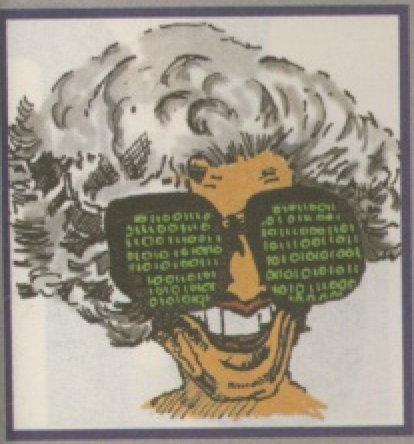
So what could you do with your new found Forms knowledge? Everything from running a club, asking people for their address to send them details, the obvious questionnaires and even selling products of your own on the Internet. The best way to get up to speed is to experiment with your own Forms and view them locally in a browser. You can always post them to yourself if you're on-line.

Next month we'll cover some advanced HTML text formatting techniques including so-called 'Tables'. Until then, stay in Form and keep on webbing. ■

Mat Bettinson



▲ Now it's all nicely laid out and presented for you in a ready to use format.



Net God speaks

There's a new buzzword hovering around the Net this month causing a lot of speculation and excitement. The 'Network Computer'. (NC) is responsible for causing all the commotion. So what exactly is behind this state of anticipation. The idea that programs on the NC will be stored and downloaded from the Net rather than the NC is the main reason for the commotion. The advantage of this method of storage is that the programs are kept up to date and can be charged on a per-use basis. This is half of the idea behind VIScorp's ED device though it still hasn't arrived. If these new machines don't need serious hardware specs but require an efficient operating system and good Net connectivity, surely the Amiga is the perfect NC? Programs would be written in the multi-platform Java for compatibility. All we need is a serious effort to port Java to the Amiga. Any volunteers out there willing to take on the job? Could you please step forward now.

Surf's up!

IBrowse goes to correction school, the new IRC on the block wins over fans and it looks like networking on the Net is here.

FCI and Demon Form script

Shortly after this month's Wired World went to press, we discovered CGI scripts for Forms on both InternetFCI and Demon, the subject of the tutorial this month (see pages 84-86). Using this new method negates the need for the ARexx script as detailed in the tutorial. For InternetFCI, the <FORM> tag needs to be changed to something like the following;

```
<FORM METHOD=POST
ACTION="http://www.thenet
.co.uk/cgi-bin/ifci-mail-
form.pl? joe@thenet.
co.uk=Subject">
```

Please note that this example needs to be all on a single line, so don't hit return on line breaks. Also, change 'joe@thenet.co.uk' to your own Email address and change 'Subject' to the subject of the Form data Email.

Using this version, if someone fills out your Form and hits submit, you will then be Emailed the Form data in an easy-to-read form. Since you have the ability to set the Subject field, it would be also possible for YAM and other mailers to sort the mails into a separate folder for even easier processing.

Demon's script is a much more simple beast however, for example;

```
<FORM METHOD=GET ACTION
="cgi-bin/mailform">
```

will post the Form data to webmaster@yourdomain.demon.co.uk so for this reason it's important that you are able to process Email to the webmaster on your system.

IBrowse gets update

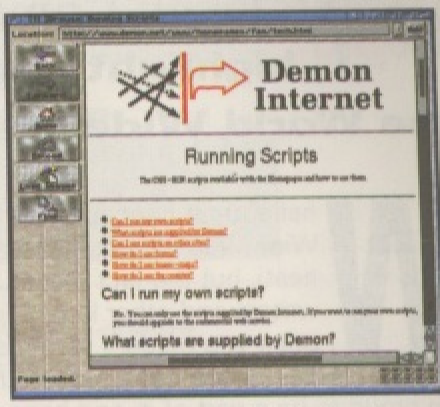
Last month we reviewed AWeb 2.1 and IBrowse 1.0. At the time of press, IBrowse had stability problems such as crashes when exiting the program. However, CU Amiga Magazine are pleased to announce that HiSoft have now released an upgrade batch to 1.02 on IBrowse author Stefan's site at http://www.efd.lth.se/~f94sbu/ibrowse/ and we can happily report that IBrowse now seems far more stable. After a week of solid use there wasn't so much as a Task Held on the CU Amiga office machines.

Congratulations to Omnipresence for sorting the programming out. This now means the Amiga Browser competition is neck and neck once again.

Dal.net is go

Regular IRC goers can't have escaped the fact that the Efnet network, where the busiest #Amiga channel resides, is a little flakey at times. Netsplits and severe lags have become an increasing problem and the permanent US/Euro split doesn't help matters either. Other networks are better in this regard but suffer because they aren't as popular as Efnet. However, the newest IRC network, Dalnet, seems to be making inroads popularity wise and sports advanced features such as registering your nickname and channel. This means that channel takeovers will become virtually impossible and no-one will be able steal your nickname.

Currently, the most popular Amiga channel is #AmIRC, which is named after the popular Amiga IRC client. You can see this and any of the others by trying any of the following Dal.net servers and typing /join #AmIRC; dragon.dal.net, liberator.dal.net and phoenix.tx.us.dal.net, all on port 6668. Contact http://www.dal.net for more information.



▲ Demon's Form script is quick, simple and easy to implement.



▲ HiQ's new site, although not finished yet, already has lots of useful information on it such as our review of the PC network/sharing setup.

HiQ's Siamese site

HiQ, the people responsible for the Siamese system, have recently constructed a new WWW site located at http://www.hiq.co.uk. This site contains details of the company's CU Amiga Magazine 93% rated Amiga to PC network /sharing setup and their range of A1200 Power Station expansions.

HiQ tell us that the site is still under construction but already there's quite a bit of information on the Siamese and the new revolutionary Amiga to PC RTG system as previewed on page 50 in this issue.

Of special interest to dual Amiga/PC owners is the planned TCP/IP interface between the Amiga and the PC so that AmIRC or the like could be run on the PC's screen using Window's TCP/IP stack. Drop in to http://www.hiq.co.uk and check it out for yourself. ■



Surf of

Our Stateside correspondent Jason Compton takes time out to highlight some of the best sites of the World Wide Web.

What a great concept! Not the World Wide Web (although it is pretty neat), but the fact that CU Amiga writers and other luminaries get to point you readers towards their favourite hotspots and hangouts on the Net. I'm proud to be a part of it, and hope that my choices will amuse, entertain, and inform at least some of you.

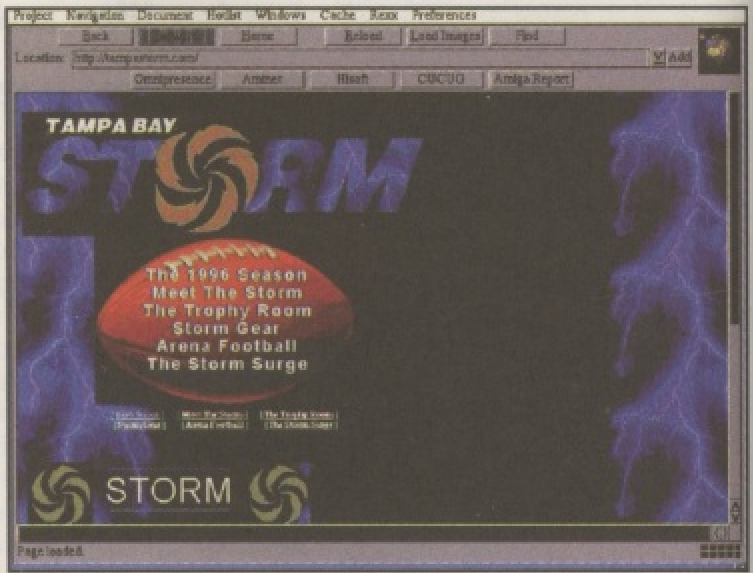
Amiga Directory

I'm sure CUCD and comms expert Mat Bettinson has mentioned this site before, but it bears repeating. If you're looking for a launching point for anything Amiga on the Web, you should start from the CUCUG (Champaign-Urbana Computer User's Group) Amiga Web Directory, at www.cucug.org/amiga.html. This is where it's at for Amiga news, company links, other Amiga site listings, you name it. And since the implementation of the Agnes search tool, there's virtually no Amiga topic that you can't find information on from the CUCUG site. Plug: Agnes will even search back issues of Amiga Report, and CUCUG has an extensive back-issue collection of the digital magazine.

CUCUG will get you to almost anywhere else you want to go for Amiga related information, but there's a new page that's worth at least an honourable mention where Amigas are concerned. It's not much to look at, but the Freely Distributable Datatypes Page has the best treasure trove of OS 3.x datatypes I've ever seen. Datatypes are little routines that sit in the background and automatically convert file types for use with various software packages, including Web browsers.

Palmtop Page

When I'm doing serious computing, I'm using an Amiga. But when I'm out and about, I sometimes feel the need to write a quick document, make an appointment record, or just play a good game. That's why I picked up a Psion palmtop computer (or PDA as they're often called) from the UK company of the same name (as featured in the previous issue of CU Amiga Magazine). In the field of palmtops, the Psions have one of the best operating systems and built-in software around, and they have the extra advantages of being easy to program (there's the aforementioned games, including a full-blown Infocom interpreter so you can play any of the dozens of classic text adventures out there while you commute) and they're exceptionally easy to network to an Amiga. Check out http://www.psion.com for more information on these neat devices.

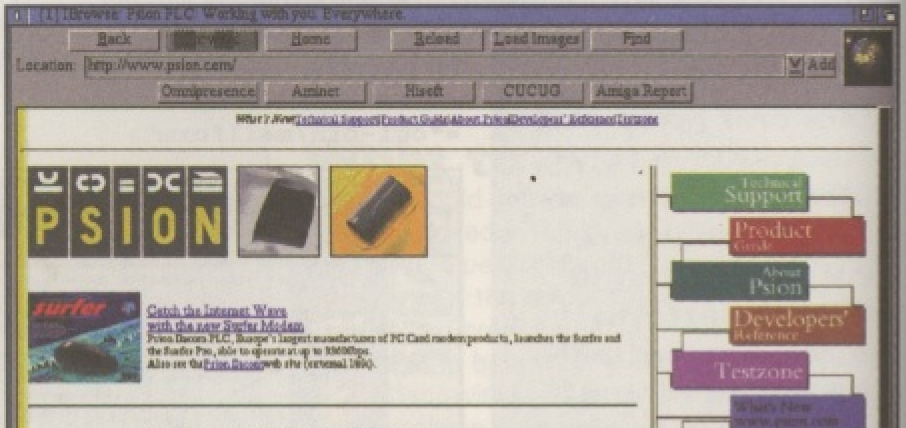


Euro-US Football

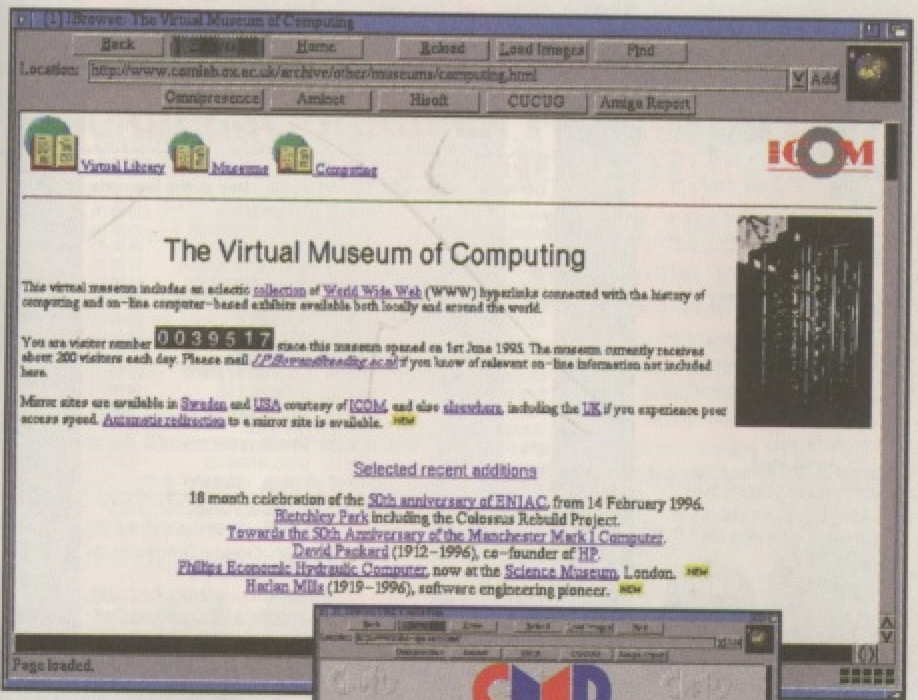
Here's one for sports fans. The World League of American Football has 6 European franchises, two of which are in the UK. The 1996 World League Champions, the Scottish Claymores, have an official website at http://www.claymores.co.uk.

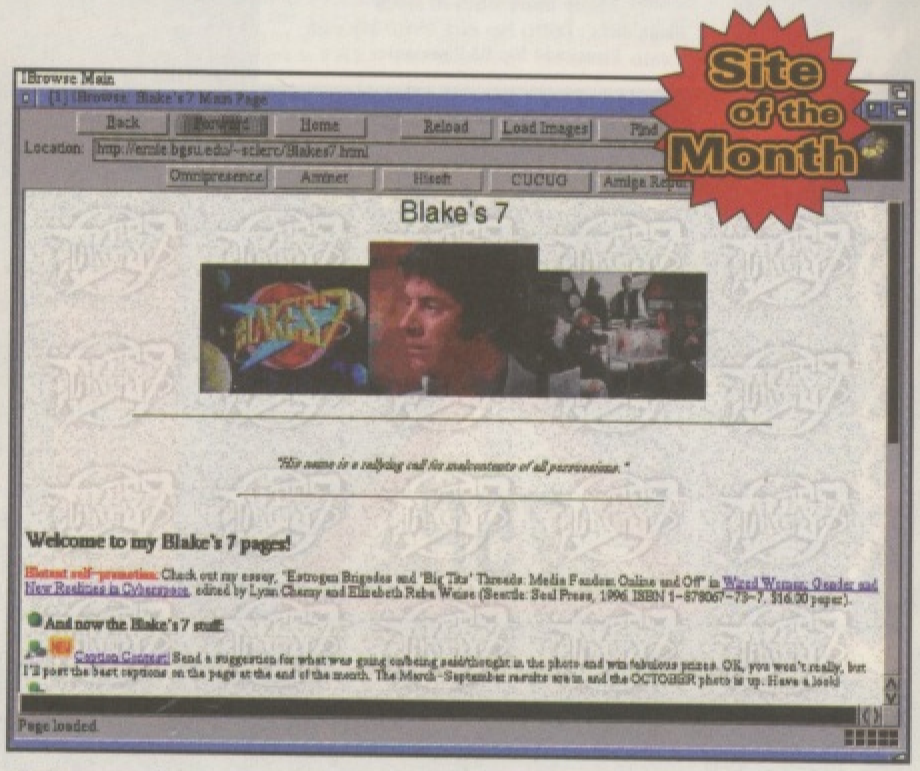
Or, if you think American Football is too slow and the field too large, try the Arena Football League at http://www.arenafootball.com/league. The game is played with fewer men and a much smaller field (a 50 yard arena, hence the name) with virtually no sidelines.

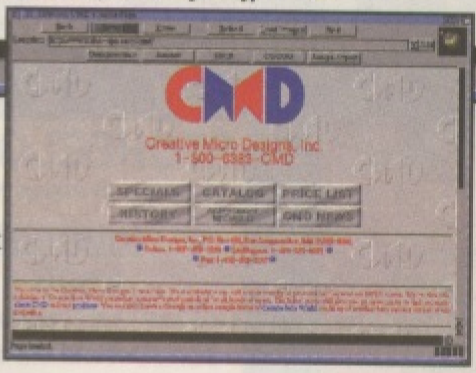




the Month







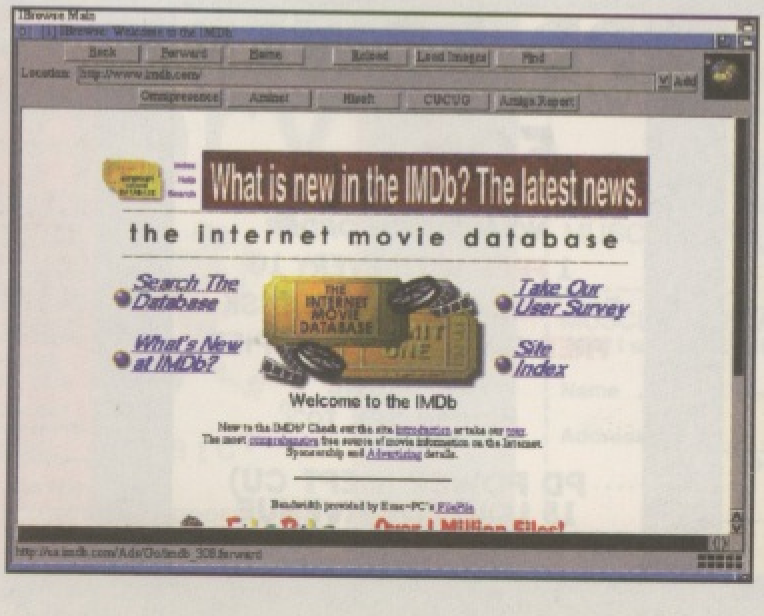
Blake's 7

CU Amiga, the Psion Palmtops, and the London Monarchs aren't the only British culture I'm a fan of. Blake's 7, the BBC space opera of the late 70's and early 80's, has spawned a global fan base and I'm a willing part of it. Most of the Blake's 7 fan pages are pretty bizarre, as some people take the show extraordinarily seriously, but this particular page is one of the most entertaining for even a casual Blake fan.

Movie Database

For the ultimate reference guides on television and film check out the Internet Movie Database, http://www.imdb.com.

Here you can look up series, mini-series, TV movies and cinematic or video releases, cross-indexed by actors, directors, writers, even crew members in some cases. The Database is user-supported, meaning that if you don't find your favourite movie or show, you're more than welcome to share as much information as you can for the next similarly-minded reader. You'd be surprised what you can learn by simply punching up a favourite actor, actress, or director and investigating their earlier works which are presented for you.



C-64 Lives!

The "C" in CU Amiga hasn't stood for Commodore for quite some time, but the origins of the magazine are indeed rooted in Commodore 64 history. If you're out there and still use your C-64, or you're interested in the recent history of the machine, stop by Creative Micro Design's web site at http://www.the-spa.com/cmd.

CMD have been designing C-64 peripherals and software for over 10 years and have done some truly amazing things with the old work-horse. How does a 1 gig hard drive, 16 megs of memory and a 20mhz accelerator grab you? Not as nice as a CyberStorm 060 card, I'll bet, but they're still impressive feats on a C-64, and CMD will gladly sell you those exact items, along with software, high density 3.5" floppies, and much more to go along with it.

If all this has got you reminiscing, don't miss the opportunity to brush up on some more computer history (http://www.comlab.ox.ac.uk/archive/other/museums/computing.html). There are sites all over the world that deal with the past decades of technological development, and this is one of the best places to get started.

You'll find dozens of links to various stories, glossaries, biographies, and anecdotes about the past half-century or so of the growth of 'thinking machines'.

Further surfing

These surfs should keep you busy for a little while. If you ever get bored with these, you can always check out the Web search engine to end all search engines, Altavista, at http://www.altavista.digital.com. If there's a page out there on the topic you want, odds are very good Altavista's heard of it. If you come across any particularly interesting web sites and want to share them with other readers, drop us a line here at Surf of the Month at the Farrindon Lane address (see contents page).

Jason Compton is Communications Manager for VIScorp and Editor in Chief of Amiga Report on-line Magazine. You can email him at jcompton@xnet.com.

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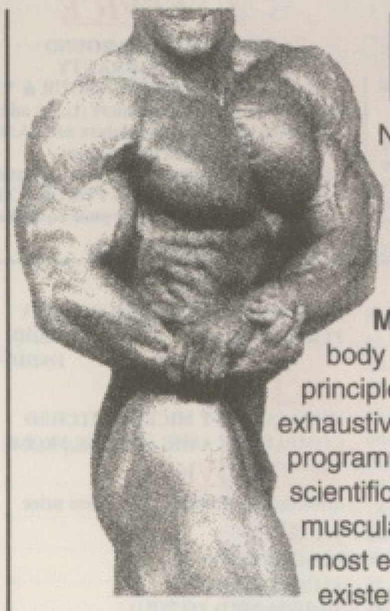
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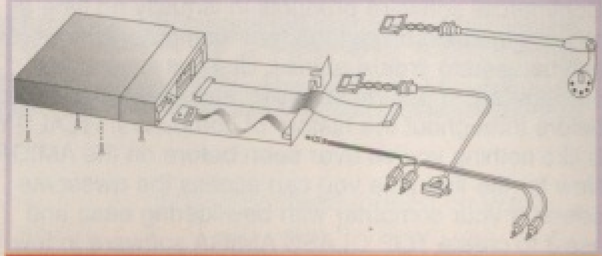
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Well now it is no longer a dream - it's REALITY!

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- Create SUPER intelligent GIANT mid level and end of level monsters just like the very best commercial games!
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Over four man years of work has gone into the development of this Software!
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A STATE OF THE ART SOFTWARE CREATION SYSTEM!
It's ***versatile*** - it's ***easy to use*** - it's ***incredibly fast*** -It's ***the biggest ever breakthrough in Amiga software creation and has already been used to create twenty commercial games and a multitude of PD software!!***
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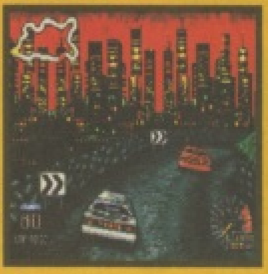
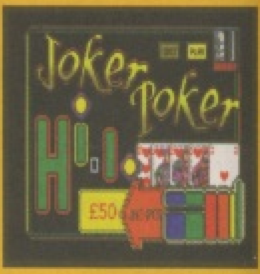
You'll also get FREE membership to the Reality User Club!

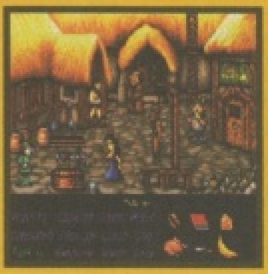
This will provide you with a phone helpline, a pen-pal list allowing you to contact and work with the already -MASSIVE REALITY userbase from around the globe! You will also have access to a HUGE range of software that has been created using the REALITY system and 1000's of graphic images, sound effects and music tracks which you can use with your own software! We are willing to publish any software that you create using REALITY or if you wish you can have other companies publish your work! The REALITY user club can supply you with ALL the graphics, music, sound effects and ideas that you need to create superb software with this system. ALL the hard work has been done for you!

So what do you have to pay for this totally amazing system?

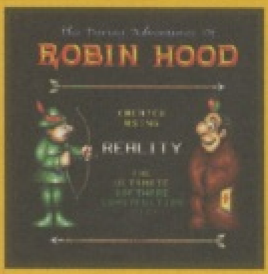
Only £29.99! This product is worth many times this price and only due to forecasted large sales, low cost advertising and direct sales to the customer are we able to offer it at this unbeatable price! By creating only one piece of software you should get your money back many many times over! How much software do you wish to create? What more can we say other than you would be crazy not to take up this very special offer! Creating software is much more interesting than using it, and REALITY is the perfect tool! Please note that the REALITY package is compatible with ALL AMIGA computers and is hard disk installable!

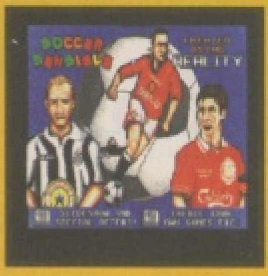
Screenshots of games created with REALITY

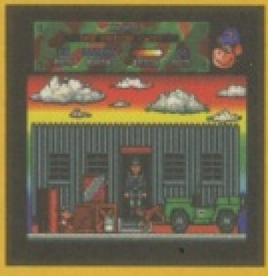










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FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Budding animators and film makers take note. The Amiga and video are the perfect creative combination.

Q. Why is the Amiga so good for video work?

A. The Amiga was always designed to work with a TV set as its primary display. Back in the 1980s the Amiga was designed to be a games console and home computer and as few people had the money to buy a dedicated VDU or monitor, the TV was first choice.

As a result, the Amiga has a video friendly output which can be used in RGB or Composite video modes for great results.

Q. How do I connect to my video recorder to record Amiga graphics?

A. It depends on your model of Amiga but A1200s have a phono-style socket for Composite video. Some video recorders have an input socket (often designed for use with Camcorders) called 'CV' or 'Composite in'. Others have Scart sockets which you'll need a Scart adaptor lead for.

A500s and A2000s have RGB outputs but you'll need a modulator or a genlock to record the output onto video tape.

Q. What's the difference between RGB and Composite? What's RF? And what's SVHS then?

A. RF is the 'Radio Frequency' signal. This is the easiest, though not the best quality, way for the video recorder to display a picture on a TV as it is a low-power TV signal transmitter. All the signals – sound, colour, luminance – are combined into one. An Amiga fitted with a modulator (like the one shipped and used with most A500s) does the same thing. Composite video contains all the video information in one cable, whereas RGB keeps the colours separate (Red, Green, Blue). It produces a better picture than composite and is used mainly with monitors and good TVs where the three colour signals are fed directly into the three video guns which make up the display. A composite signal must be first split into the three colours again, which affects quality.

SVHS is important when recording as it divides the video information into colour and brightness (chrominance and luminance). The CD32 is the only Amiga with an SVHS output, although some genlocks provide an SVHS output. SVHS is the best quality video signal available for home use. VCRs which support SVHS recording provide images which are much clearer than standard VHS.

Q. Can't I make use of the better RGB signals with my video? It's fitted with a Scart socket round the back.

A. Although the pins are in the schematic of the Scart socket, few video recorders implement RGB input. Yes, they'll send out RGB for display on TVs but don't accept incoming RGB signals.

Q. What will the Amiga let me do with my video?

A. You can record anything the Amiga can display, which means you can create title pages, scrolling credits, sub-titles, animations, your own cartoons ...

Q. Which screen mode should I use?

A. Always use a PAL screen mode, such as HIRES PAL. It's sometimes OK to use Interlaced mode – although it flickers on a monitor it can look good when recorded on video tape.

Q. How can I create sub-titles?

A. You'll need a genlock for that. It's a piece of hardware connected to the Amiga's video output. It allows the Amiga graphics to 'overlay' the live video: for example, you can overlay a black rectangle containing white text and create subtitles.

Q. How can I display computer graphics 'behind' the live video?

A. For that sort of effect you need an extra box of tricks called a 'Chromakey' which can electronically remove certain colours from video and replace it with a computer generated backdrop: such as a weathermap for example.

Q. How can I create animated subtitles and scrolling end credits?

A. Use an Amiga art program such as Deluxe Paint or Personal Paint. An authoring system such as CanDo is excellent for linking together multiple animations.

Alternatively use a dedicated video titling program such as Scala which will provide excellent text and scrolling features. Dedicated video titles often come with their own special fonts which look very smart indeed on video.

If you want to record very long animations, use a program such as Viewtek which can spool animations directly from disk. So for example, you could create a huge animation with Imagine and then use Viewtek to play it back whilst you are recording it all on your video recorder. Happy day!

Q. How do I get rid of the ugly borders around the screen?

A. Use OVERSCAN. Paint programs will allow you to open a screen in Overscan mode and this will stretch the screen out on all directions so there is no border. It's therefore possible to create animations and display pictures which fill the entire video screen.

Q. On my Amiga can I control editing between two video recorders/a VCR and a camcorder?

A. Yes, there are various hardware/software packs around which can achieve this. For more details see some of the specific video based magazines available.

Q. Can I digitise live video, edit it and then play it back?

A. Yes, but not easily. This is 'non-linear video editing'. For best results you'll need a very fast Amiga fitted with a huge SCSI hard drive and a hardware M/JPEG capture and replay board. VLAB Motion is one such card.

You can get a budget version called VideoMaster from Eyetech (tel 01642 713 185) which will record quarter-sized screens in 16 colours. Not broadcast quality, but excellent fun nevertheless.

John Kennedy

Masterclass

PART 4

Which is the most important file on your Workbench disk? We reckon it's the startup sequence and here's why.

Ever wondered what the wait was for when your floppy or hard drive booted? Or why the same requester 'Please insert...' keeps popping up asking for a disk you haven't got? All is explained ...

S Revisited

Although we have touched on it before, the S directory is so important, it's worth taking another look at its contents. The far left screenshot on page 97 illustrates what you will see if you open up the S directory on a Workbench 3 machine. You'll need to use the Window menu and pick Show... All Files to see the contents of S, because by default the files do not have any icons attached to them. If you have Directory Opus 4 (which we gave away on the on February 95's cover disk) use it to view the text files in S, it's easier.

For the purpose of this tutorial we'll look at exactly what S contains and will go on to explain what the various files do.

Startup sequence

This the most important file of all. When the Amiga starts to boot up after being switched on, it looks in the S: directory to see if startup-sequence is present. If it is, it loads it and then starts executing the list of AmigaDOS commands it contains.

Several very important things are done by the startup-sequence, including patching any bugs in the operating systems, setting the keymap used by the keyboard, creating important directories and copying files to the RAM disk. Eventually, startup-sequence loads the Workbench environment.

The list on the right shows what a typical startup-sequence looks like. I've added the line numbers — they aren't present in the file. **(See Figure 1).**

The following is an explanation what some of the more important lines are doing in the sequence:

[3] Use the SetPatch command to fix any bugs in the operating system. The Quiet option stops any text from appearing on screen: this would cause the Shell to be displayed instead of the blank screen suddenly being replaced by the Workbench as it pops up.

[4] Use the Version command display the current Workbench and Kickstart release. However, the output is not printed on screen – it's sent to the dummy device NIL: So, why do it? Because the command also passes the version into special variables 'Kickstart' and 'Workbench'.

[5] This command sets aside some memory to act as a buffer for the internal floppy disk. This speeds up access. If you have a reasonable amount of RAM you might want to increase this number to 25. You can also add buffers to hard drives and other floppies if you wish: five are always added by default.

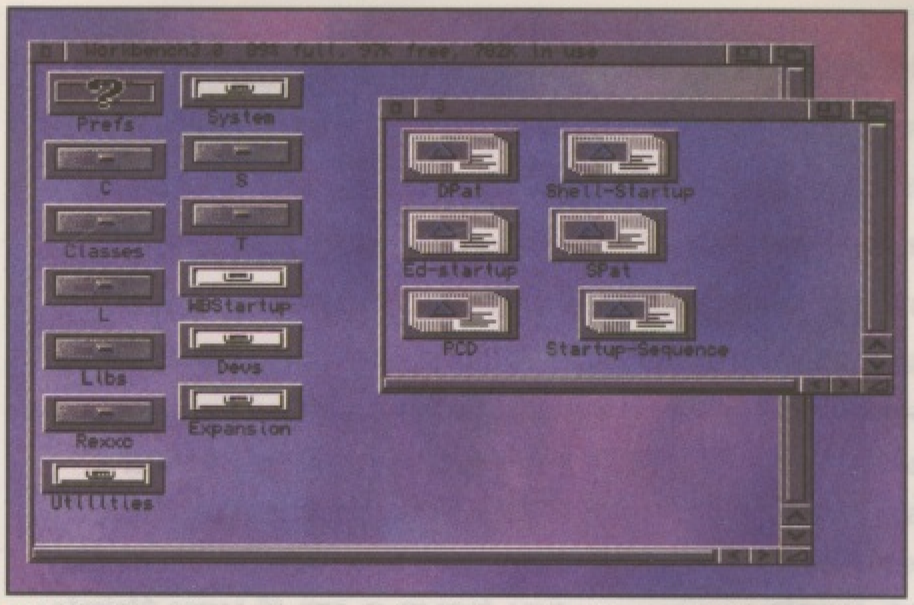
[6] This makes sure the script won't stop with an error if something bad happens. The error will be reported but the script will carry on to the end.

[8] Four directories are created in the RAM disk: T, Clipboards, ENV and Sys.

[9] The contents of the directory ENVARÇ (including any subdirectories) are copied from the boot disk to the ENV directory in the RAM disk. It's here that many programs store their preferences and so copying to

Figure 1

```
[ 1] ; $VER: startup-sequence 39.9 (9.8.92)
[ 2]
[ 3] C:SetPatch QUIET
[ 4] C:Version >NIL:
[ 5] C:AddBuffers >NIL: DF0: 15
[ 6] FailAt 21
[ 7]
[ 8] C:MakeDir RAM:T RAM:Clipboards RAM:ENV
RAM:ENV/Sys
[ 9] C:Copy >NIL: ENVARC: RAM:ENV ALL NOREQ
[10]
[11] Resident >NIL: C:Assign PURE
[12] Resident >NIL: C:Execute PURE
[13]
[14] Assign >NIL: ENV: RAM:ENV
[15] Assign >NIL: T: RAM:T
[16] Assign >NIL: CLIPS: RAM:Clipboards
[17] Assign >NIL: REXX: S:
[18] Assign >NIL: PRINTERS: DEVS:Printers
[19] Assign >NIL: KEYMAPS: DEVS:Keymaps
[20] Assign >NIL: LOCALE: SYS:Locale
[21] Assign >NIL: LIBS: SYS:Classes ADD
[22] Assign >NIL: HELP: LOCALE:Help DEFER
[23]
[24] IF NOT EXISTS SYS:Fonts
[25]    Assign FONTS:
[26] EndIF
[27]
[28] BindDrivers
[29] C:Mount >NIL: DEVS:DOSDrivers/~(#?.info)
[30]
[31] IF EXISTS DEVS:Monitors
[32]    IF EXISTS DEVS:Monitors/VGAOnly
[33]       DEVS:Monitors/VGAOnly
[34]    EndIF
[35]
[36]    C:List >NIL: DEVS:Monitors/~(#?.info|VGAOnly)
TO T:M LFORMAT "DEVS:Monitors/%s"
[37]    Execute T:M
[38]    C:Delete >NIL: T:M
[39] EndIF
[40]
[41] SetEnv Workbench $Workbench
[42] SetEnv Kickstart $Kickstart
[43] UnSet Workbench
[44] UnSet Kickstart
[45]
[46] C:IPrefs
[47]
[48] C:ConClip
[49]
[50] Path >NIL: RAM: C: SYS:Utilities SYS:Rexxc
SYS:System S: SYS:Prefs SYS:WBStartup..SYS:Tools
SYS:Tools/Commodities
[51]
[52] IF EXISTS S:User-Startup
[53]    Execute S:User-Startup
[54] EndIF
[55]
[56] Resident Execute REMOVE
[57] Resident Assign REMOVE
[58]
[59] C:LoadWB
[60] EndCLI >NIL:
```



▲ **Using the 'Show all' command you can view files that have no icon. Unfortunately for WB1.3 users this function is unavailable, it's only on WB2.0+, time to upgrade I think ...**

RAM can speed them all up quite a lot. It also ensures that any changes made to the contents are temporary until the contents are also saved to ENVARC. The NOREQ keyword stops any requesters from appearing on screen.
[11] Makes the command Assign resident, which means it is copied into memory to speed things up a little. Notice the use of the keyword PURE to force the command to become resident.
[12] Makes the command Execute resident.
[14] to **[26]** Makes some important assigns, that is, creates a new device name (such as REXX:) which points to directory or device which already exists. It's a way of creating shortcuts.
[28] BindDrivers is hardly used, but when it is it causes any extra hardware to appear on the Amiga by instigating its driver software.
[29] This line mounts all the AmigaDOS devices present in the directory DEVS:DOSDrivers. This could include CrossDos devices, CD-ROM drives or specialist virtual devices such as PIPE:. Notice how all the files are mounted, except the icon files (which all end in .info) because of the use of ~(#?.info) which means 'Not any file ending in'.info".
[31] to **[39]** These instructions process the list of monitors available by creating one large file (stored in T: and called M), executing it and then deleting it.
[41] Creates a variable in ENV: called Workbench, which contains the value in the variable called Workbench. This was defined way back in line **[4]**.
[42] Creates the Kickstart variable, as above.
[43] Deletes the temporary variable Workbench. The variable in ENV: is still available though.
[44] Deletes the temporary variable Kickstart.
[46] Runs the IPrefs program, which sets the preferences in the Workbench (colours, fonts, background and so on)
[48] Starts the console clipboard manager program.
[50] This long line defines the various paths which AmigaDOS will use when looking for commands. When you open a Shell and enter a command, Amiga DOS will examine all these directories in this order until it finds the command.
[52] to **[54]** If there is a file called user-startup in the S: directory, execute it. This means that instead of adding commands to s:startup-sequence, you can add them instead to the file called user-startup.
[56] Remove the resident command Execute from memory.
[57] Remove the resident command Assign.
[59] Load the Workbench!
[60] Shut down the (invisible) Shell which has been executing this start-up sequence.

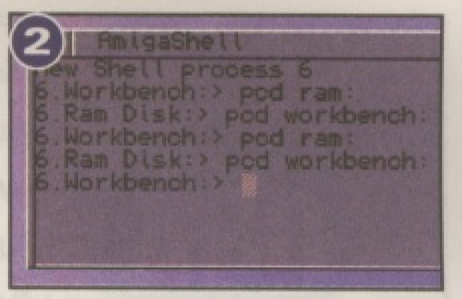
Shell-startup

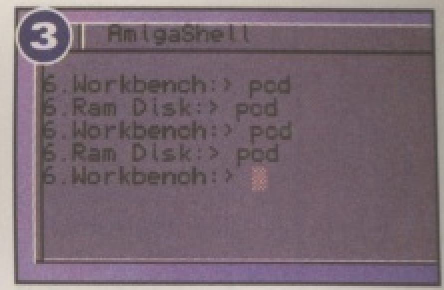
Every time you open up a Shell window to enter some commands, this script is loaded and executed. The default script is pretty tame:

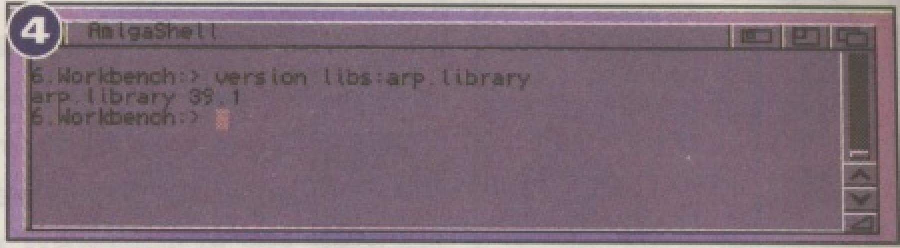
```
; $VER: Shell-Startup
40.1 (9.2.93)

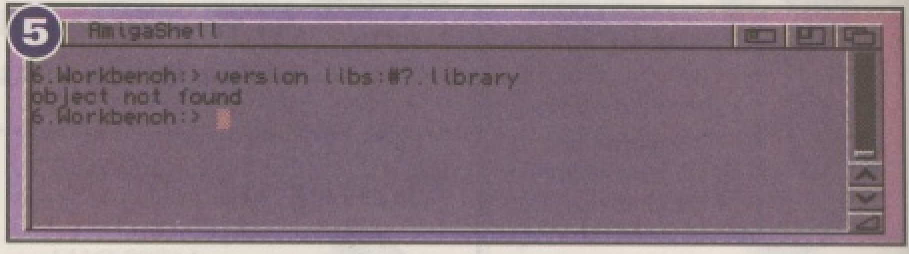
Prompt "%N.%S> "
Alias Clear "Echo
*"*E[0;0H*E[J*" "
Alias XCopy "Copy CLONE "
```

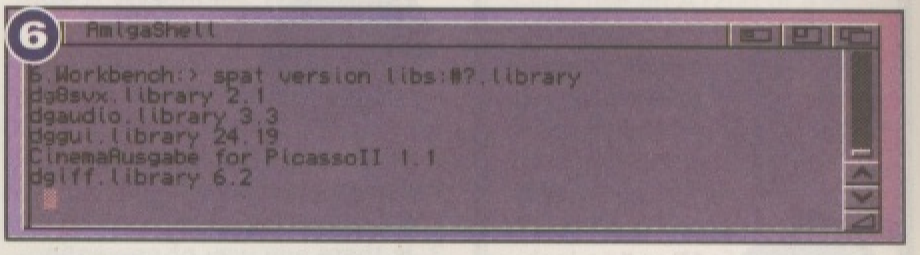
You can see that it defines the prompt which each Shell will use and creates two more commands called Clear and XCopy. Clear will clear the window using a sequence of control codes. XCopy is useful for copying entire disks or directories in one go. If you would like to include you own AmigaDOS commands, this is where you define them.











Ed-startup

As you may know, AmigaDOS comes with its own text editor called ED. ED is a lot smarter than many people realise. By editing this file, you can customise the menus which Ed uses. There isn't enough space to go into detail now, but take a look at the file and try creating your own designer ED program to impress your mates.

PCD

This is another script, but one designed to be used as a command. It's based on the AmigaDOS command 'CD' which is used to change the current directory. If you use the command in the same was as CD, you won't notice any difference for example: **(see Figure 2)**

However, when you enter PCD by itself, it returns to the last location you moved to, like this: **(see Figure 3)**

DPAT & SPAT

These are two more scripts which can be treated like commands. They are used when you want to perform the same command on multiple files, and although their use is limited (not least because many commands already allow use on multiple files) they can occasionally be very useful.

SPAT is a 'Single file PATtern' program. It allows you to include wildcards in commands. Wildcards are special symbols which can represent multiple files:

#? Means "all files"
#?.info Means "all files ending in .info"
test.??? Means "all files starting in test. and ending with three letters, e.g. test.doc, test.iff and test.bak"

Here's an example. Let's say you wanted to examine the version number of a library in the LIBS: drawer, you could do it like this: **(see Figure 4)**

Now if you wanted to do it to all the file in the LIBS:drawer, you might try this. As you can see, it doesn't work. **(see Figure 5)**

That's where SPAT comes in. Use it instead and you'll achieve the original aim. **(see Figure 6)**

DPAT works in a similar way except that it allows you to enter two filenames.

That's it for this issue. We'll continue our exploration of the Workbench next issue. If there is any particular topic that you would like covered in Masterclass, please write in. ■
John Kennedy

Logos, meanings and mysteries:

CD ROM — CD32 queries, ParNET and various other CD ROM-related problems.

EXPANSION — All about upgrading RAM, operating systems and processors.

ACCESSORIES — Plug-in hardware of any kind: scanners, disk drives etc.

PROGRAMS — Answers to queries on particular pieces of software.

SOUND — Music, sampling, MIDI and anything that makes a loud noise.

UTILITIES — Miscellaneous tools to keep your Amiga running smoothly.

PRINTERS — Form-feeds, page-breaks, preferences and lots, lots more!

MONITORS — Monitors, TVs, modulators, screen-modes and all that stuff.

GRAPHICS — Pixels, sprites, animation, pictures. In one small word: graphics.

BUSINESS — Spreadsheets, databases, organisers, accounts ...

COMMS — Everything you need answering about the internet

HELP — Not everything fits into a pigeonhole, but anything you like fits in here.

Q&A

Got a problem with your Amiga that you just can't solve? Don't worry we're here to help. Send in all your Amiga-related problems to Q&A, CU Amiga Magazine, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



Yes, we're here to assist. So please don't be shy about sending in those niggling problems with your Amiga.



Forget 'niggling', I want BIG juicy problems that I can get my teeth into. Go on: have a go if you think you're hard enough.

Going up ...

1. Will an FPU in my A1200 RAM board make games such as Colonization run faster?
2. How can I stop my screen flickering on a Commodore 1084S when I play SimCity 2000?
3. Is there any way of preventing a picture becoming tiled in my Workbench background?
4. I am seriously thinking about buying a CD-ROM drive and an external hard drive. Can they both run simultaneously if connected via a Squirrel SCSI interface?

Stuart Baily, Guernsey.

1. No, it won't.
2. Unless SimCity 2000 allows you to select a non-interlaced screen mode there is no way you can stop it flickering (unless you had a flicker fixer and a big box Amiga).
3. Pictures are tiled when they are smaller than the size of the Workbench screen, so make sure that your backdrop picture is at least as big as this.
4. Yes, you can use up to seven SCSI devices.

CD-ROM rage

I have a CD32-SXI and a hard drive, but when it boots it doesn't seem to recognise that there is a hard drive. It's not the power supply because I bought a Goliath to replace the original. Please help, because I don't have a lot of patience and I don't want to hurt it?

Simon Colvin, Luton.

The first thing to check is the cabling. Is everything plugged in properly? Is the drive 'spinning up' as you turn on the power? If it's not, and it's showing no signs of life at all, then there's something up with its power feed, or the mechanism may have been fried.

MMU query

1. What exactly is the MMU (Memory Management Unit) used for and what software takes advantage of it?
2. I have seen internal PC IDE 4 speed CD-ROMs for £50. I have fitted one in a PC before and connected one to a sound card. Is it possible to do this with my A1200?

Michael Connell, London.

1. An MMU manages memory, as its name suggests. The most common use of an MMU is virtual memory, a system that uses hard drive space as if it was RAM. This is particularly useful for graphics applications especially if you're working with very large 24-bit images.
2. You bet! Check out our feature in CD-ROM Scene this month for all the details.

Imagine crash

I have recently come across a problem with Imagine 3.0. I have installed it on my hard drive when I try to render anything it crashes invalidating my drive. Please help?

Stuart Black, Faxland.

Have you checked that you've installed the correct version? If you have no FPU then you need to install and run the Integer version. Attempting to render with FPU version will crash the machine.

Sprite errors?

My A1200 has problems with DBLPAL, MULTISCAN, or other high resolutions above PAL and NTSC. After about an hour horizontal flickering lines appear on my 1960 monitor. Someone told me it was 'sprite-errors'. What can I do about it?

Paul Hendrikx, The Netherlands.

Presuming these lines are analogue glitches (as opposed to pixels being written by the Amiga) then it sounds like your monitor is faulty. If it's the Amiga introducing the glitches, that may be the result of some tampering with the monitor drivers using the MonEd program.

Memory swop

1. I am thinking of buying an 030 accelerator board with 4Mb RAM. Could I use the 2Mb off my Hawk RAM board to give me a total of 8Mb?
2. What would be the best way to add a CD drive to my Amiga?
3. How can I use CrossDOS without it stripping the filenames down to eight characters?
4. When I try and compile some of my programs in AMOS I get the message 'Program not Tested'. I have run and tested these programs and they work fine, so

what exactly is the problem?
5. Can I get the 'Say' command working on the A1200?
6. Is it possible to set up keyboard short-cuts for Workbench?
7. When I try to write to disks I get told the disk is write protected, even when the disk is write enabled.

Neal Michie, Glasgow.

1. If your new accelerator has two Simm slots and can accommodate both a 2Mb and 4Mb SIMM at once this will be possible. Shop around and check the specifications and features before you buy.
2. See our feature in this issue for various cost-effective options. The easiest way is to get a Squirrel CD-ROM kit.
3. You can't. It's based on the old PC DOS format which only allows eight characters for a filename and three for an extension.
4. Have you actually used the Test option? If so, you've stumped us there.
5. Yes. You need the narrator.device in DEVS:, the translator.library in LIBS: and the Say tool in C:. You can get these from Workbench 2 disks.
6. Yes, you can define the function keys so that they perform various tasks. The tool called FKey can be found on your Workbench in the Tools/Commodities drawer. It's very easy to use.
7. It sounds like a mechanical fault with the drive mechanism. It's also worth checking the cabling inside the case.

RAM raid

1. Are there any RAM boards on the market that accept 16Mb or larger SIMMs?
2. If not would the 50mz Viper or Apollo accommodate 16Mb and which is better?
3. Are all FPUs compatible with all RAM and accelerator boards?
4.I would like to buy 64Mb of RAM. Is this too much?
5. Are there going to be any 300mHz upgrades for the A1200 in the near future?
6. If I bought a 2.5Gb internal hard drive, will I have to take the existing 170Mb drive out?
7. I installed SCALA MM300 but when I ran the program it came up with an error saying 'File SCALAMM.SYS not found'. Since scala say they cannot be contacted what should I do?

Simon Evans, Hook.

1. Yes. The Blizzard range can take SIMMs as large as 128Mb. With an add-on you can use two at once to give 256Mb of Fast RAM and 2Mb of Chip RAM.
2. The Viper II boards can also take up to 128Mb SIMMs. Both work very well, although the Blizzard boards get our vote for superior build quality.
3. No. Check with the supplier of your board before buying an FPU. There are two main types of FPU: PLCC and PGA.
4. 64Mb of RAM sounds lovely! No, it's not too much if you have a use for it, and there are plenty of advantages of having loads of RAM.
5. It looks unlikely at the moment.
6. Yes, there's only room for one hard drive inside the A1200.
7. Try phoning Scala on 01920 444294. They should be able to help you out.

A new look

I have had my 1.3 A500 for about a year and I want to somehow upgrade it to a WB 2.04 and add 2Mb RAM, please help.

John Fergusen, Wakefield.

You can buy a operating system upgrade that consists of new Kickstart chips and Workbench disks. You don't see these upgrades advertised much these days but if you call around you should find someone selling it. If you can't, then it might be cheaper to buy a second hand A500 Plus (which comes with OS 2 as standard). You'll find plenty of adverts for A500 RAM upgrades in this issue.

Drive connect

My children have an A500+ with an A570 CD drive. Is there any way I can attach a hard drive to the port on the rear of the A570 unit? Also are there any Internet providers which have support for an ISDN modem? Are there any drivers for the Syquest EZ135 parallel port version available? Does the HP870cxi printer have a driver on the Amiga.

Peter Barton, Hastings.

You should be able to connect a SCSI hard drive (or any other SCSI device) to the connector on the back of the A570, although there are some models of the A570 which actually use IDE connections instead. While there are Internet providers offering ISDN links, to our knowledge there is currently no way of using an Amiga directly with ISDN. There's no driver and never will be for the parallel version of the EZ135 (or Zip), because the Amiga's parallel port is incompatible. Go for the SCSI version. You've stumped us on the printer driver question. Try some PD suppliers or shareware CD-ROMs.

Monitor match

I have just bought an A1200 for my son. Where could I purchase a manual for it? I also picked up two monitors in an auction, both are digital models, VR201-C and a VT-320. They have no leads or cables. Can I use them with the A1200? If so, what cables would I need to buy?

Miss C Waterman, Weymouth.

There's no-one selling Amiga manuals at the moment. Your best bet is to try to find some second hand, or give Bruce Smith Books a call on 01923 894 355. They don't publish official Amiga manuals but they do have a good range of their own Amiga reference and tutorial books. As for the monitors, it sounds as if they're probably PC monitors.

You may be able to get them working if you get an adaptor to link the monitor cable to your Amiga's RGB output. You will need a compatible PC monitor driver in Devs/monitors. If the monitors have a video input then you can use them without any of this messing around.

Apollo trouble

I have recently fitted an A600 with an Apollo 620 with 4Mb RAM. Once fitted the board seems to work fine, then after a few minutes any program being used crashes and the computer will not reboot, or even recognise any floppy inserted into DF0. I've tried disconnecting the external drives and printer to no avail. What's going wrong?

Mr G.P.G. Wilson, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

It could be that the 620 card is not fitted tightly enough in the A600. It needs to sit firmly on top of the CPU, which can be a bit of a problem. Try calling Wizard Developments on 01322 527800.

Interfacing

1. I am thinking about buying a MIDI interface to use with my Yamaha keyboard which has two MIDI ports on the back (in and out). Will this enable me to use the Yamaha keyboard instead of the Amiga keyboard? Which MIDI interface would you advise me to get?
2. Can I use an A1200 or a PC keyboard with my A600?
3. I'm still puzzled about the World Wide Web. Do I need to just have a program to access it or do you need to have an Internet site such as Demon. If you just need a program which is an ideal one to use?

Jonathan Archer, Blackburn.

1. You will be able to use your Yamaha keyboard to record music notes into a MIDI sequencer, which will then be able to replay the music from the Yamaha unit.
2. No you can't.
3. To access the World Wide Web you need a modem, which will allow you to link up to an Internet Service Provider (not an Internet site as you suggest) such as Demon or Internet FCI. These companies link you to the Internet. You will also need TCP/IP software which handles the low level communications between your Amiga and the Internet (Miami is definitely the best one to go for, see the review in the October issue of CU Amiga Magazine for more details). Finally you will need a Web browser, such as IBrowse or AWeb. Both of these were reviewed in the November issue of CU Amiga Magazine.

Send your Q&A problems to ...

You can send your technical problems [or answers – Ed] to CU Amiga by the following means:
By letter to Q&A, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.
Email: Q+A@cu Amiga.co.uk.
NO SAES PLEASE We regret that we can't respond to readers' questions by post or over the phone. Please do not include a stamped addressed envelope with your letters as we simply don't have time to answer the thousands we receive. Responses are only available through the pages of this magazine.

Points of view

Grabbers for Pete's Sake



■ Mat Bettinson is CU Amiga Magazine's Technical editor.

by Mat Bettinson

I'm constantly having to explain to PC and Macintosh users why I use an Amiga. It can't have escaped the attention of many Amiga users that a good deal of their compatriots have deserted to other platforms. I'm not going to labour over any hard feelings for the lack of official Amiga development but I can back up why I continue to use the Amiga.

I have a PC myself and it's been a learning experience to discover its strengths and weaknesses. It's important that we do not kid ourselves about the PC platform even if it may be depressing at times. It's not a one sided argument though, I can hold my own quite well explaining to a PC user why I use an Amiga, based on facts and experience, and certainly a demonstration!

Without a blow by blow technical comparison between platforms, it's enough to say that the PC is a good machine for running big applications. It's also got oodles of 3D games and you can mix and match powerful inexpensive hardware (which it needs to do anything). These areas the Amiga is weaker in for a variety of reasons. Those who have departed the Amiga platform usually count those aspects as being important and didn't invest in additional Amiga hardware.

> **"Those who have departed the Amiga ... didn't invest in additional Amiga hardware."**

The flip side of the coin is surprisingly a software issue. If I need a program to do virtually anything, it can be found in some form on the Aminet, free and usable. It will fit into my system nicely and the most I'll have to pay is a shareware fee if it's indispensable. Not so on the PC. Not only is there far less PD/shareware, it's harder to find, totally non-standard, more likely to have been crippled and more expensive to register (which is almost always obligatory).

In short, it's a pain. I once had to download five screen grabbers (actually Windows does the job but I needed a program to save out) before I found one that didn't obscure the pictures with a load of 'Unregistered' text all over them. A screen grabber for Pete's sake!

Being a bit of a techie type, I love to have dozens of small programs and a few big packages running on my Amiga on different screens, happily multitasking away. This is not the sort of thing the PC is good at. For that reason, I use both and can appreciate what they do well, though the Amiga is firmly my favourite.

Depending on your own needs, it may well be worth investing in Amiga hardware on the basis of the Amiga's superb PD and shareware catalogue. For instance, why not compare what you get on CU Amiga's cover CDs to the contents of those on PC Magazines. It's a good example of the Amiga's massive shareware software base that the PC just can't touch. ■

Giving the Game Away



■ Lisa Collins is CU Amiga Magazine's Deputy editor.

> **"Will we have software publishers telling us not to print anything in case it might harm sales?"**

by Lisa Collins

Recent stories in the trade press about magazine cover disks are worrying. The general consensus amongst software houses appears to be that cover mounting demos of their latest releases is harming potential sales.

When I spoke to Ian Jenkins of Effigy Software recently, he admitted to similar fears saying that he felt a general a rule of thumb was that if someone gets a cover disk version of a new game from a magazine they feel they don't need to buy the full version as they have enough of the game on the demo. And can boast to all their mates that they have it already without actually buying it.

I disagree. Surely from the software publishers' point of view, the idea of cover disks is to create as much interest as possible in any forthcoming game? It's much like running a trailer for a new movie at the cinema. If gamers are satisfied with just one or two levels of a game then that would be the standard size of all commercial games. Clearly it is not. While we do our best to make sure our cover disk game demos give you as much entertainment as possible, no-one expects them to take the place of the full version. How do games companies expect to create any awareness of their game apart from adverts and perhaps a news story or a preview a few months before the game is released?

Where will it all end? Will we have software publishers ringing us up now telling us not to print anything about their latest release in case it might harm sales? I think not. Because any sort of publicity is good publicity. If software houses are seriously worried about cover disk demos affecting their sales than they should release a shorter version of the game or a timed out demo. Not decide to scrap cover disk demos altogether. ■

I Have a Dream ...



by Tony Horgan

I was talking to someone a few days ago about the future of the Amiga – basically whether it had one or not. It's a topic we've all discussed before, often with people who don't know much about the Amiga and the whole philosophy behind the Amiga scene. What was notable about this one, was that the other party was supposedly well up on the personal computer industry and markets, with a substantial business interest in the Amiga market, but was convinced that not only would there never be another Amiga, but there was not even a demand for such a machine. Apparently this was a belief shared by their colleagues too.

The basic theory for such an opinion went a bit like this. IBM PC clones have now achieved global domination in the home and office. With such high 'market penetration' it would be impossible for another platform to take over. Therefore, PC=computer, computer=PC, end of story.

The suggestion that there might be room for an alternative computer platform, even if it sold in smaller numbers than the PC, was brushed aside as pure commercial naivety.

Unfortunately this is a commonly held belief among almost everyone outside of the Amiga scene, or at least among the people that matter, those at the top of the major computer manufacturing companies who decide what goes into development and what rolls off the production line. Of course there is room for a next generation Amiga, whether it bears the Amiga name or just takes the idea on to the next stage. A new Amiga, and I mean a brand new one, not an upgraded A4000, has the opportunity to start from scratch, to totally redefine the way personal computers work, to put in place new standards and practices for the next millennium.

Imagine that: a completely new breed of personal computer that is not tied to any of the limiting computing conventions that hamper the current machines. Do you remember how revolutionary the graphic user interface was when it first appeared? Or what about the first time your saw an Amiga running a bunch of programs all at the same time? These were some of the innovations of the 80s that have changed the way we work with computers for ever.

Don't expect similar innovations to be lead by the PC scene. So long as they are locked into their on-going development based on ancient technology, held to ransom by a single software developer demanding huge amounts of money for the most inefficient operating system, there is never going to be any radical progress.

No, the only way we are going to see a true next generation computer platform is if someone manages to bring out a machine that goes right back to the drawing board to completely rethink every aspect of the personal computer, from its architecture to its operating system to its software.

As long as there are computer enthusiasts who think for themselves, question the hype from the monopolies and know what they want to do with their machines, there will always be room for a computer like the Amiga.

Here's the big question though: is there a company with enough vision, passion, drive and (most importantly) the finances and marketing clout to make a commercial success of such a ground-breaking machine? At the moment, the gulf between those companies with the cash and those with the vision is vast. It's all very well a small company developing a revolutionary new platform, but if they can't manufacture it at a realistic price and tell the world about it, it's never going to get very far. What's required is some kind of joint venture between a powerful international player in the computer industry, and one of these smaller developers. The crunch point is whether anyone can combine business sense, finance, a rock solid vision and a deep understanding of how to design a new kind of people's computer. It's a very tall order, one that so far has not been met by any one company.

But whether or not it bears the Amiga name in the end, I firmly believe there will be a next generation personal computer that re-writes the rulebook, blows us all away as the Amiga did when it first appeared and steals another 10 year march on the competition. Just you wait and see. ■

> **"At the moment the gulf between those companies with the vision and those with the cash is vast."**



■ Tony Horgan is CU Amiga Magazine's brand new shiny Editor.

Backchat

Welcome to the wacky world of CU Amiga Magazine's letters. As as well the usual interesting variety of topics, this month we're getting lots of geography lessons for free!

Lack of direction

I'd like to issue a serious complaint about the instructions in September 1996 concerning the installation of VistaLite. To put it bluntly, there weren't any. After searching for your stinking magazine I was jolly well looking forward to getting to grips with the new cover disk. What a disappointment it must have been for the other poor blighters. Luckily due to my exceptional knowledge I managed to install it. I hope that you've got a good explanation for this because I'm certainly waiting for one.

Basil McNaughty, (aged 80).

You're right, we did miss out the installation instructions although we stated these were on page 12 of that issue. Fortunately your "exceptional knowledge" was enough for you to figure out that in order to install it you have to double click the sole icon, which is rather cunningly entitled "Install VistaLite". I hope that is a satisfactory explanation. Tony Horgan, (age 26)

Geography lesson 1

After I read your article (Euro View) in the July issue of your fantastic magazine I can only say that the Amiga situation in Holland is not so good but the Amiga situation in the Netherlands (two provinces to be precise) is a bit better. However, I would like to complain that you confuse the Netherlands with Holland. Why are the Netherlands always confused with Holland, why are there more countries in the world with other names than they had originally (Sri Lanka vs Ceylon, Zimbabwe vs Rhodesia)?

I am a bit angry about your mistake because I am not from Holland but from North Brabant (the second largest province in square kilometres of The Netherlands). You can't say to a Scotsman that he's from England. That Scottish person wouldn't be very happy. I must say that it's not only your fault to confuse Holland for the Netherlands. There are also a lot of Dutch companies who use 'Made in Holland' to mark their products (funny because Made is also a town in the province North Brabant) but I have to start somewhere to let the world know that Holland is not a country. It was in the good old days of Pirates (thanks to Microprose) but now (and for a long time it has been) the name is The Netherlands.

And do you think you are being funny by mentioning sex, tulips, sexy tulips as a description of the Netherlands? I have one for Great Britain: divorced monarchy, old fashioned manners. And to end my complaint on Euro-View: A-Ha is a Norwegian pop group so there.

Ard Michielsen, Breda. (The Netherlands)

Many of those comments in the Euro View features were supposed to be funny, but were a bit cheesy really. We'll try harder next time. Thanks for filling us in on the Netherlands/Holland situation.

Geography lesson 2

I am writing about the article in the October issue entitled The Amiga in North America. There seems to have been a mistake on something which could be misleading to your readers in the graphical representation of North America that appeared in the article.

Not to be picky but in your feature it stated that any areas with the maple leaf on them was Canada yet you left out all the islands off the mainland of Canada.

In Newfoundland there is a running joke that Canada ends at Halifax, Nova Scotia due to it not getting as much recognition and help as the rest of Canada. All the Amiga dealers have left Newfoundland so at least an Amiga magazine could make sure that yes, we are a part of Canada! Viva Amiga!

George Noel, Newfoundland, Canada.

Our top art person Helen was responsible for that rather nice map. She couldn't think of a good excuse for the slip-up though. In view of this oversight and the one pointed out in the previous letter we will shortly be appointing a Geographical Editor on the magazine to guard against such inaccuracies in future – or maybe we'll just invest in an atlas. As for your running jokes, you crazy Canadians obviously know how to have a good time! Got any more gags for us?



AB3D2 slow on 060

I hereby challenge any hackers reading this to take the AB3D2 engine apart and see if it can be made to go any faster on 060 equipped Amigas. If you can achieve this, send the resulting patch to CU Amiga Magazine for evaluation and get them to forward it to Team 17 for official endorsement and then get it on the cover disk/CD. This would earn the undying gratitude of the Amiga community who have upgraded their CPU to the max and would also encourage a lot more people to go for the 060. Blood may fly faster in a Blizzard 060 but I feel that a bit of super-scalar, pipelined 060 specific optimising is just the thing that AB3D2 needs. So come on all you hacking and demo crews, take time out from demo writing and really show us how clever you are.

Ron Hill, Belfast.

We'll go for that! Anyone who thinks they are up to the task can feel free to send us a patch which we'll gladly include on a forthcoming cover CD or even floppy disk, space permitting on the floppy side.

Positive power

I've read people's moans on the newsgroups and in magazines that their machine is dead but they're wrong. Check out all the new software developers and publishers who have been bringing us games now. Look at Andy

Here's hoping history repeats itself

A mere four years ago, the PC was little more than a computer seen only in the workplace. Today it is common in many homes and businesses across the world. It is very hard to believe that this machine up until recently had virtually no commercial software in production for it, but today companies are clamouring to produce for it.

For the Amiga, it is quite the reverse. Four years ago, the Amiga was a healthy machine with many new commercial games and utilities in constant production. Dedicated games magazines would have frequently have had issue of more than 100 pages. Today it is a different story. Magazines have recently ceased publication, after surviving for months with issues struggling to reach even 40 pages. If you think about it, you could say that the Amiga is the PC of 1990. Seen as an anoraky computer, with little support and no potential for games or serious software. Then companies such as Microsoft and ID saw that the PC could be a popular machine and between them designed two of the most popular pieces of software ever – Windows 95 and the Doom series. Maybe history will repeat itself, I hope it will. The PC will never be as unpopular as it was up until recently, but the Amiga can regain its following. A machine that can stay popular, even with no parent company for a year is obviously extremely unique. All the Amiga needs is a push start from some companies with vision and maybe VIScorp will turn out to be the Microsoft and saviour of the machine.

To let the Amiga die would be criminal, especially when you think that one of the most popular games ever originated on it –Sensible Soccer. So come on computer companies and software publishers. Produce Amiga clones, produce software and don't let recent sales figures get you down. The biggest reason the Amiga hasn't sold is it has not been advertised recently. If you want to sell products, ADVERTISE, otherwise how will anyone know your products exist?

Daniel Thorton, Peterborough.



▲ Let us not forget: Sensi Soccer, one of the greatest games ever was born on the Amiga.

Davidson who brought us Worms, his game is known by game users all over the world for being the most original. He's now bringing us Worms AGA, The Director's Cut and Worms 2. Looking at CU Amiga Magazine, you can see a new generation of games developers. Some might say their games aren't all that good but just imagine what they'll be able to do in time to come. These are the type of people and companies which we should cherish and not just discount them at their first shot at making a game. They are what is keeping the Amiga alive and they our the future. If we brush them aside then we have no chance. Due to the lack of games, people have been expanding their Amigas to full capacity. People like you and me have been buying accelerators with extra memory, CD-ROM drives and modems. No wonder sales of games have been low, we have spent a lot of money upgrading the spec of our machines leading to the spec of games going up. We'd be proud of what we have achieved as now accelerators are cheaper meaning more people are expanding. I've had enough of people saying my machine is dead. Dead means without life but I can tell you without hesitation that there is life in our Amigas. If you you want to be negative about the Amiga then do it somewhere else but not in the newsgroups and not in the magazines.

We have a future with so many companies wanting to make Amigas it can only be a good thing. We must not sit back, we should be telling software and hardware companies what we want. We should not be saying I'll let everyone else do it and I've got no time. Make time. I personally Emailed a games developer and gave him my support and he Emailed me back thanking me. You can make a difference so don't become a part of the problem by moaning my machine is dead, look at all the positive things that have happened and are still to come. I hope people will agree with me.

Philip@mailman.dnet.co.uk

We're sure many will agree with you.

Time on my hands

I notice that your address spans three street numbers. Is your office really that wide then? Yours, cor-I've-got-a-spare-stamp-ingly.

David Dolliver, Pertahire.

Some people must have very little to do. Actually, it's not that wide really, as wide buildings go. Not as wide as, say, the Guardian newspaper building just over the road from us. That's probably about ten street numbers wide. Presumably there aren't many wide buildings in Pertahire? Oops, there we go again, making geographically-ignorant jokes ...

Cover chaos

Something fishy is going on with your new November issue. I couldn't work it out at first but then it hit me: you've printed two different covers, each featuring a different character from The Chaos Engine. Is this a ploy to get us to buy both editions of the magazine and thus sell twice as many copies? Or maybe it was just a mistake? Explain please!

Thomas Gladstone, Leicester.

Well spotted that man! Indeed the November issue is something of a collector's edition with the Navvy and the Mercenary each having their own covers. Why? Because we wanted to, and the fat bloke fits better on the floppy edition while the skinny one is better suited to the CD cover.

Good on ya

I am writing in to agree with Net God about the idiots who run down the efforts of programmers who are trying to benefit the Amiga community (July 96 CU Amiga Magazine). Personally I like Voyager as it does more than the other web browsers than I have tried. For something that is FREE and is this good I can only thank Oliver Wagner for his efforts. I am not a programmer on any current platform but I can appreciate the effort that this gentleman has put in to Voyager and I thank him for doing so. I certainly hope that he will continue to develop this fine product of his intelligence, and that he is now in full health. If he requires a Betatester I will gladly offer my services. The flamers need not apply.

David Outram, Brisbane, Australia.
Email to doutram@powerup.com.au

From the pulpit

About the future Amiga. If you're reading me Mr. VisCorp, I would like you to pay attention because these tips could make you earn a lot of MONEY. I repeat the magic word: MONEY. The new Amiga has to be completely new. It has to include part of the old dedicated AGA chips so software will be compatible, it needs an improved sound chip (8 channels is a minimum these days...), improved graphic chips too 'coz AGA is definitely too slow in 256 colours, it needs a powerful 3D and a 3D mapping dedicated chip, and a mother card that runs at 300Mhz minimum and that wonderful OS we all know, an improved version of course.

We need games. Games attract those potential buyers. So, Mr VisCorp, the best thing to do is to hire a software house and make them write the most beautiful and incredible game in the world, and oblige shops to put it as a demo on the new Amiga.

As for the Amiga users: do something. Find coders and GFX artists on the Internet and write games. Huge games that need AGA, 4 Mb, and a hard drive, so people will understand that the standards are much higher than five years ago. I'm doing it, so why don't you?

Diego Pappalardo, Belgium.

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CU AMIGA MAGAZINE

Next Month ...



We've got a real treat in store for all 3D rendering fans in the January issue of CU Amiga Magazine. In fact, it's so hot we're sworn to secrecy until the issue hits the streets on December 15th! Needless to say, you will certainly not be disappointed. This is one issue you will not want to miss out on!

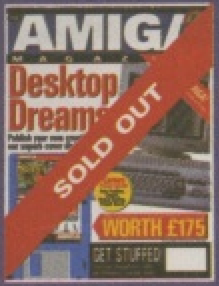
Also ... A career in graphics? So you want to make a living out of computer graphics? Make sure you pick up the next issue of CU Amiga Magazine for all you need to know about how to break into the exiting computer graphics industry, from games all the way through to Hollywood special effects studios.

JANUARY 1997 ... OUT DECEMBER 15TH

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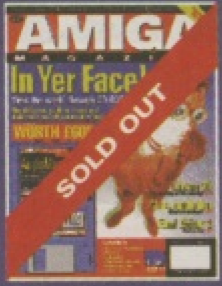
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October 1995



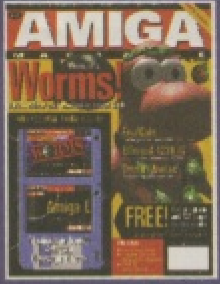
ON THE DISKS: Pagestream 2.2, Fears and Citadel demo. **FEATURES:** Using your PageStream cover disk for DTP, Storage: HDs floppies and CD-ROMs. **INSIDE:** Odyssey, Real 3D v3, PageStream 3.0i and a multimedia station reviewed.

November 1995



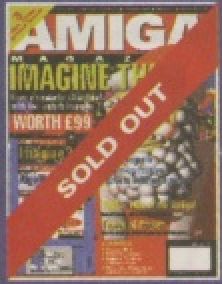
ON THE DISKS: AudioMaster IV full program, Virtual Karting demo, CD-ROM edition- Aminet 7 and more. **FEATURES:** CD-ROM definitive guide to drives and disks. **INSIDE:** Cinema 4D, Mac™ Emulation, Final Writer 4, Pinball Mania.

December 1995



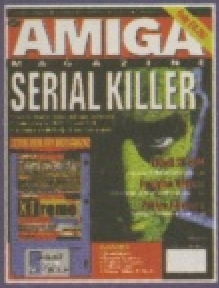
ON THE DISKS: Worms demo, Amiga E full program plus free Amiga E manual **FEATURES:** Programming, Amiga music. **INSIDE:** Leading Lap, Worms, Flight of the Amazon Queen, Coala, FinalCalc and Amiga M1438S Monitor.

January 1996



ON THE DISKS: Imagine 3.0 full program, Zeewolf 2 & Algomusic **FEATURES:** 3D rendering using our cover disk. **INSIDE:** MiconiK Tower, World Construction Set, Amilink, Zeewolf 2, SWOS 95/96, Super Tennis Champions and much more.

February 1996



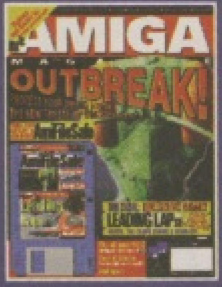
ON THE DISKS: TextureStudio plus Imagine objects, DVerb, Mandel 92, Bluff Titler, Amiga E source code, Xtreme Racing. **FEATURES:** Serial linking, portable Amiga prototypes and the first Net Wedding. **INSIDE:** DiskMagic, HiSoft CD-ROM, Virtual i glasses.

March 1996



ON THE DISKS: VideoStage Pro, Imgauge & XFD, Gloom Deluxe and 10 Worms levels. **FEATURES:** VideoStage and The future of Games. **INSIDE:** 060 for A1200, Wordworth 5, Blitz Basic, Super Street Fighter II Turbo, Super Skidmarks data disk.

April 1996



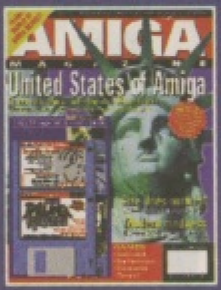
ON THE DISKS: AmiFileSafe, Leading Lap SE – 5 level full game. CD-ROM edition available. **FEATURES:** Virus Protection and Wallace & Gromit in the right computer. **INSIDE:** SX 32, HiQ Station, The Chaos engine previewed, Zeewolf 2 tips, and more...

May 1996



ON THE DISKS: Soundtracker Pro II, MIDI Sequencer demo, Alien Breed 3D2 demo. **FEATURES:** Free Amiga music book, the new Walker, Amiga Surfer pack, and the quest for Amigas. **INSIDE:** LightWave 4, Slamtilt Pinball, Tracksuit Manager 2 reviewed.

June 1996



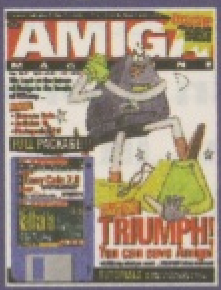
ON THE DISKS: Termite demo, Killing Grounds demo. Plus free 96 page net and comms guide. **FEATURES:** Escom sells Amiga Technologies, publish your music. **INSIDE:** Modem round-up, Total Football and new TimeKeepers disk reviewed.

July 1996



ON THE DISKS: XiPaint (full program) and Primal Rage demo. **FEATURES:** Special report on what's happening in Europe and the latest on Visorp and PIOS. **INSIDE:** Image FX 2.6, Surf Squirrel, A4000 Tower, Primal Rage, SWOS Euro and more reviewed.

August 1996



ON THE DISKS: EasyCalc (full program) and Valhalla III demo. **FEATURES:** The future of the Amiga with VIScorp, the new PIOS machine and the second part of the Euroscene feature. **INSIDE:** Siamese Twin, Photogenics 2.0, Valhalla III and Tin Toy reviewed.

September 1996



ON THE DISKS: Vista Lite (full program) and a demo of Brian Lara Cricket '96. CD-ROM edition too. **FEATURES:** The Aminet exposed. All 6 gigabytes! **INSIDE:** Final Writer 5, OctaMED SoundStudio, Atapi CD-ROM drive. Plus an exclusive preview of the new AGA Worms.

October 1996



ON THE DISKS: Upper Disk Tools: ideal for sorting out those awkward disks and drives! **FEATURES:** The Amiga in America, Net software... **INSIDE:** The speed issue, or something. Three top accelerators, a TCP/IP stack comparison and Capital Punishment.

November 1996



ON THE DISKS: XCAD 2000 - The premier 3D CAD package, plus Chaos Engine 2. Choose CD-ROM or floppy edition. **FEATURES:** Palmtop Amiga-Psion link-up. **INSIDE:** Opus 5.5, Delfina DSP sound card, Web Browser War, Alfa Quatro, CD-ROM writer and more.

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